

The Virtual Arts and Life Magazine

reZ

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MoonreZZer
Runaround the 50s
The Silence After
Medici University
Sailing Virtual Seas

Bai Nightfire
Say, River
Counting Sheep

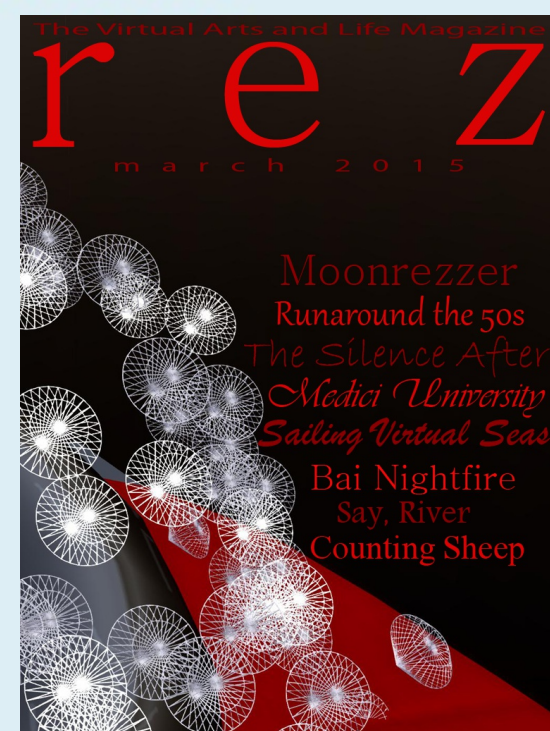
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read rez Magazine online at <http://rezmagazine.com>

- **Moonrezzer** If you thought you knew a thing or two about the Moon, think again. Art Blue reveals unimaginable lunar secrets involving his upcoming art exhibit at LEA. Green cheese, Art? Really?
- **Bai Nightfire** Our fashion correspondent, Stargazer Daylight, interviews an up-and-coming model, Bai Nightfire, who shares some fashion tips, including how to fit your eyelashes (finally!)
- **Say, River** For lovers of poetry, it really doesn't get much better than this sparse, evocative, and quite astonishing work by Will Blake.
- **The Silence After** Emily Hamelin treats us to the second installment of her masterful short story about the seductive yet vulnerable assassin, Clarice, who struggles with her next assignment.
- **Sailing the Virtual Seas** Hitomi Tamatzui always seems to find the most fascinating locales, this time around the local marinas and the wide-open virtual seas. Anchors aweigh!
- **Runaround the 50s** There's only one person I'd want to show me the best of the 50s: The Perfect Gentleman, of course.
- **Counting Sheep** When Crap Mariner can't sleep, duck for cover. We know he's going to take it out on someone.

About the Cover:

Giovanna Cerise created this other-worldly artwork called *Moon With Diamonds* and it seemed like the perfect accompaniment for this month's feature article, *Moonrezzer*, by our very own traveler of time and space, the incomparable archivist, art patron, bon vivant, and owl lover, Art Blue.





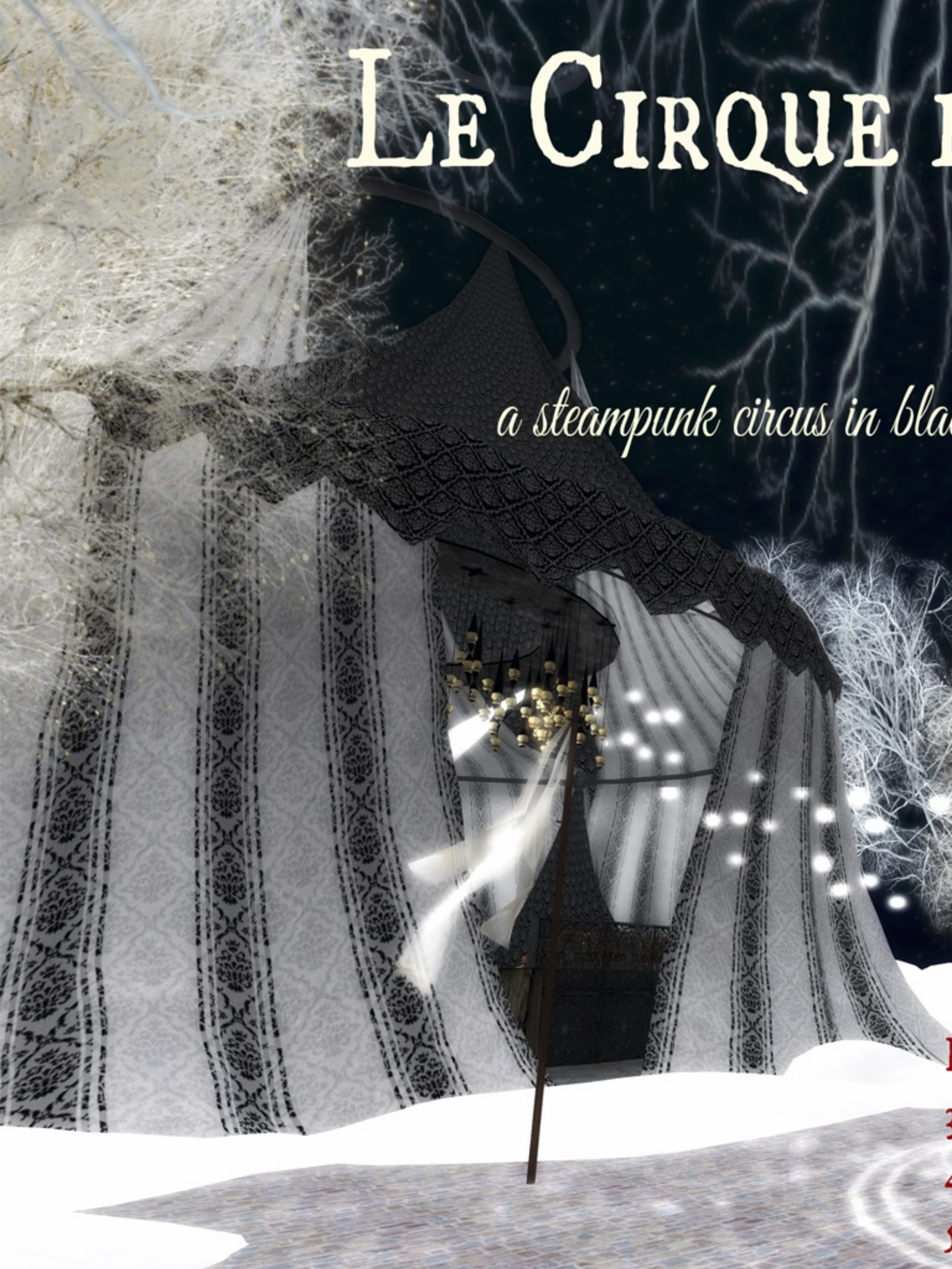
After Dark Lounge

At Mai Tai

CONTACT: Meegan Danitz
meegan.danitz@gmail.com
Facebook.com/rhispoem

LE CIRQUE

a steampunk circus in black



DE NUIT

an Idle Rogue Production

black and white

PERFORMANCES:

3RD APRIL AT 7PM

4TH APRIL AT 2PM AND AT 7PM

5TH APRIL AT 7PM

at Idle Rogue

Each month this year, we are including one of the months from Bryn Oh's 2015 Calendar, which was produced by Art Blue with the help of Ziki Questi and Jami Mills. Art has sent copies of this wonderful example of immersive art to several of the most well-respected museums in the world, in his single-handed effort to preserve the finest examples of early immersive art, before they are lost forever.

Bryn Oh 2015 Immersive Art



“Bryn’s March calendar features one of her most unique works, *Virginia Alone*. Bryn had the foresight to see in her interviews with this eccentric real life woman themes that are important to each of us: how we survive in an absurd world, how we create order from chaos, how we face life’s daunting challenges, just like Virginia.” - Jami Mills

march



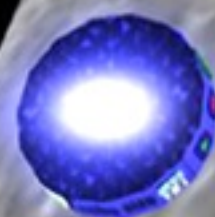
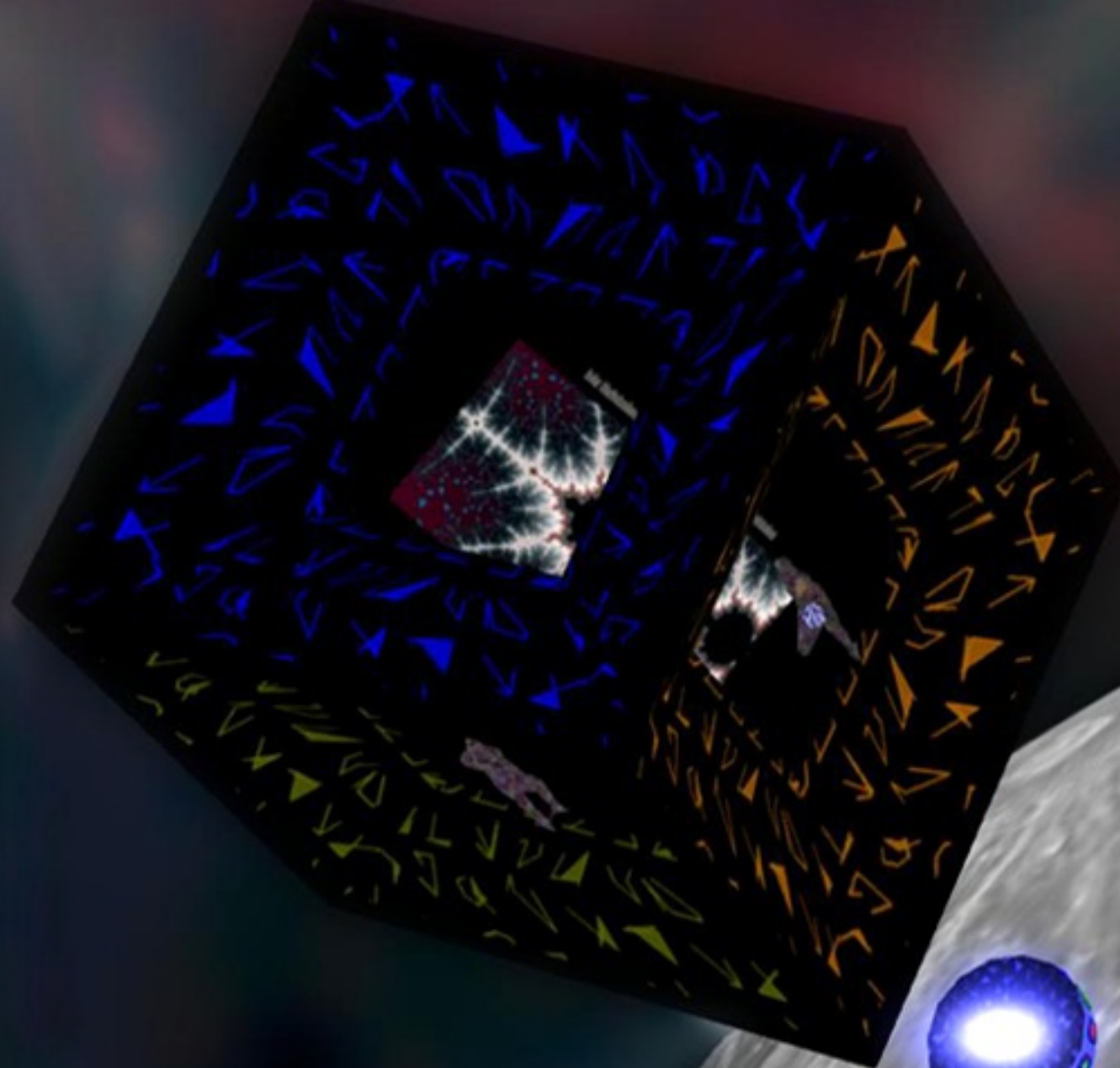
Virginia Alone

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

“Now, I am a senior, 79 years old, and have extremely poor eyesight. I can see no more than a foot ahead of me. The whole place is covered with a heavy white fog.”



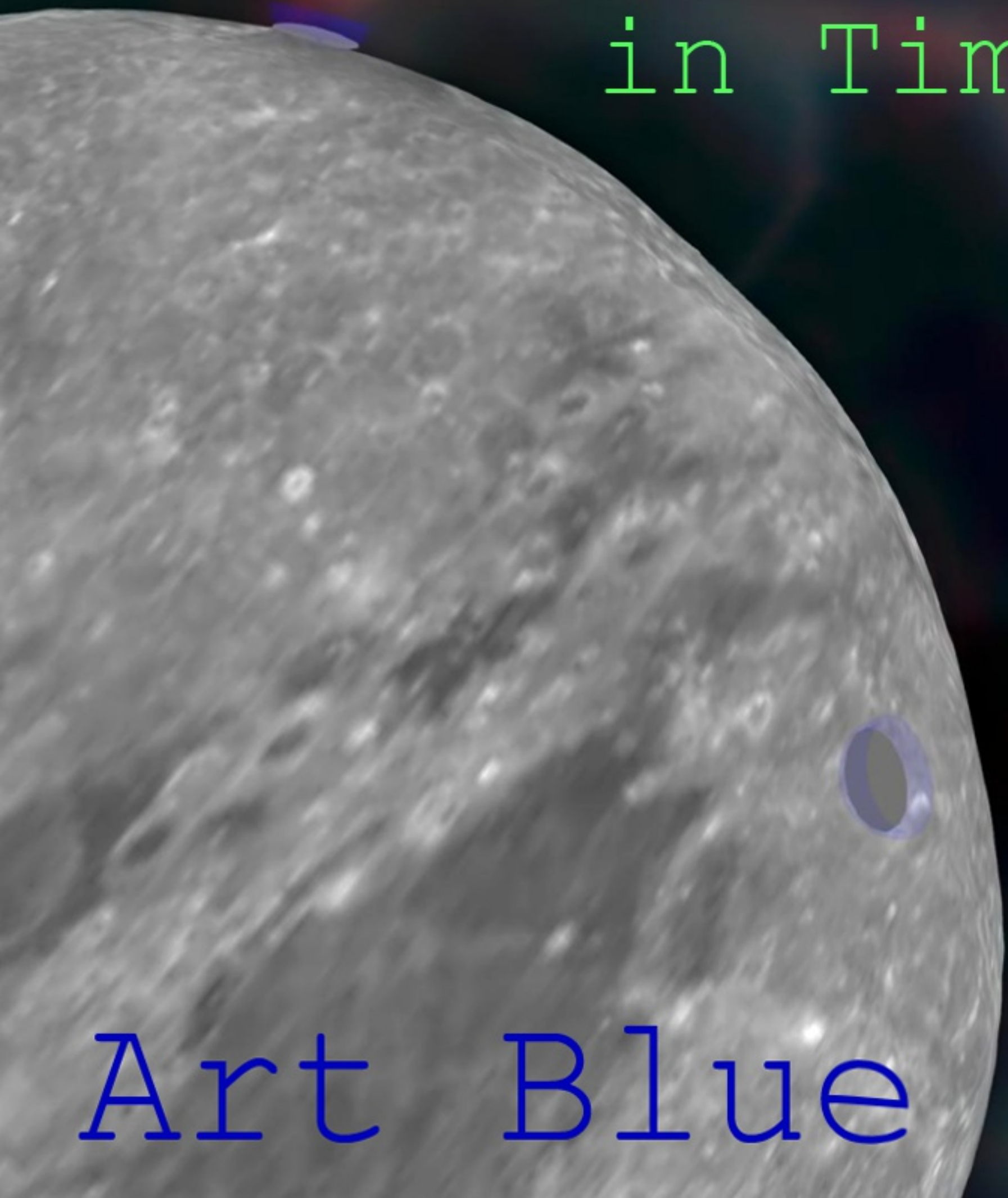
MO
B



By

ONREZZER

ack and Forward
in Time

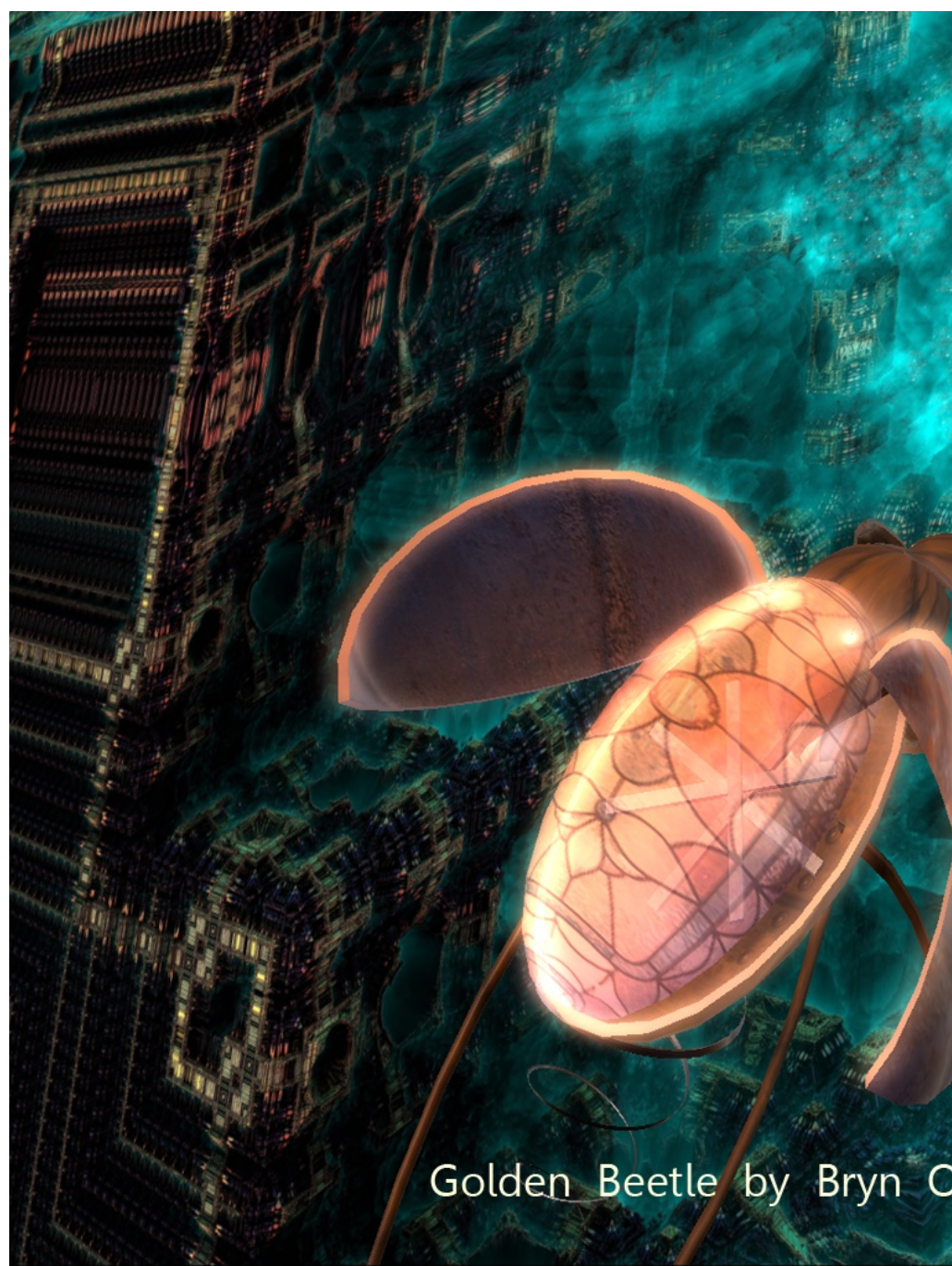


Art Blue

The problem of a futurologist is simple. He lives in the world of future and tries to make things coming ahead understood. Sometimes all his tries seem to have no sense at all. I was on a trip, and with me a person with a PhD in medicine and listening to my iPod with ear plugs I lent her, as she suddenly said, “The music is getting slower, the battery might have gone weak.” And it was not a grandma or a retired person. Just the opposite. She was about to head to new frontiers in her career. For me, it looks like she was thrown back to the Walkman age from Sony where indeed the upcoming end of a battery had an effect on the motors of the tape wheels. So what to do when a big part of the society is still stuck in the analog age?

It brings me to a point that this journey shall be written in a new language, a language that will exist over time as there in art, forms of art never experienced before. This art shall exist over time, as this is the beginning of a new age, but this age shall stay connected to the past. I will not add all the technical facts as I did in the story about 2115, *The Perfect 10 in Elysion* last month in *rez*. I will address you, dear reader, in the universal language of imagination that may touch your soul for a deeper understanding. I need to repeat some words to tune you in so you get used to it, but I will offer a personal experience as a reward.

Lines, curves and dots carved in stone were the first signs of art ever made by humans. Stone was the material to conserve the messages of the first known passages. This way we know of the great scarab of Khepera who made the transformations of Ra. I like to call this time the first era of The Golden Beetle, as the sound when you speak it out fits to the age of the spirits.



Golden Beetle by Bryn C

In this era, there was true believing that there was something outside the world that you see with your eyes and you touch with your hands.

Then the age of the mechanics took over as Leonardo da Vinci drew his sketches of the upcoming machine industry. From these times on, our western society is fixed on causality seeking: if – then – else – not. Everything can be described by NAND and NOR circuits which will lead me to the GATE OF NOR in one of my next stories. After the computer was invented by Konrad Zuse, it took about 30

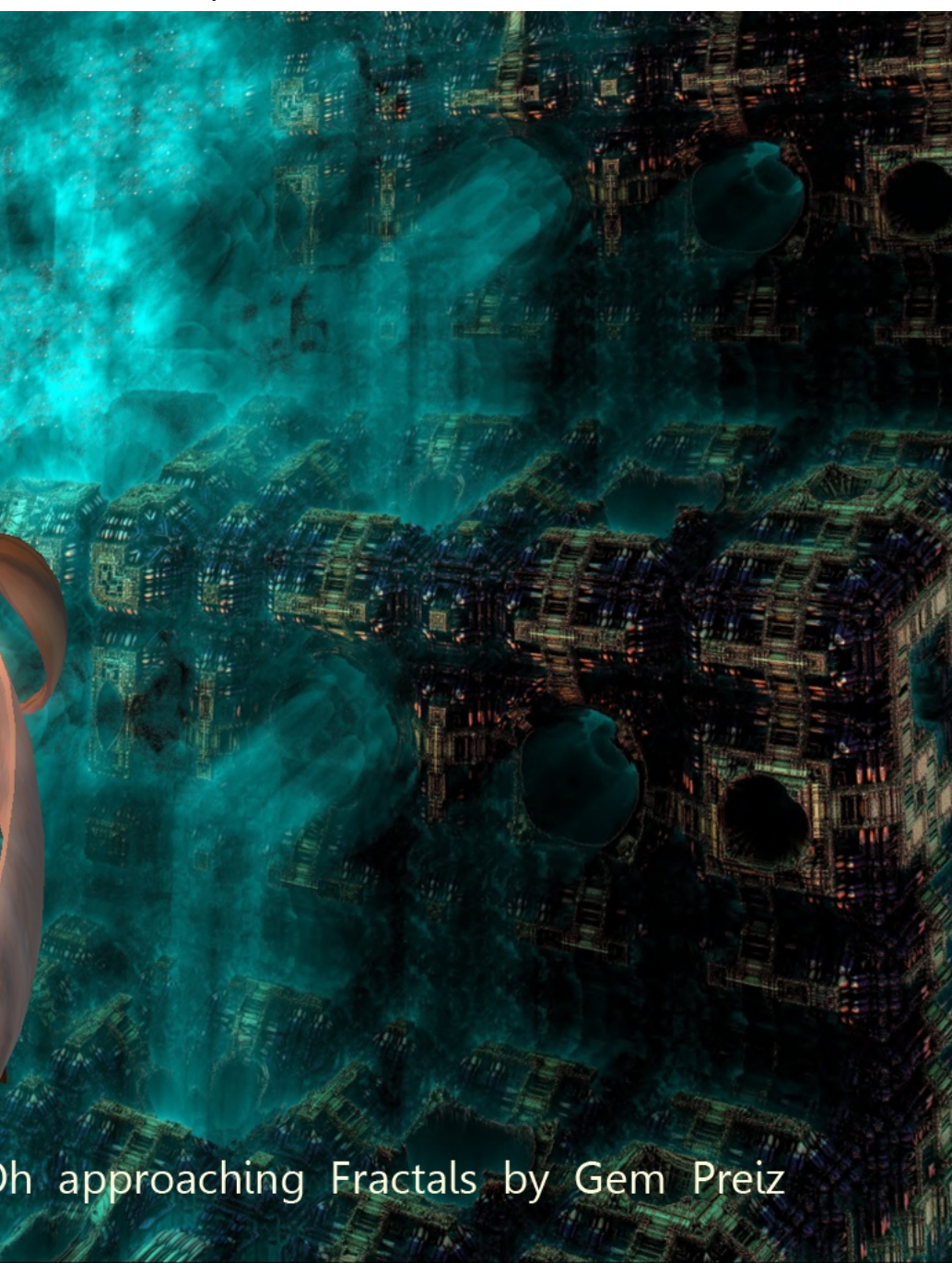
made its way quite unnoticed in the last century.

First Signs of Digital Art

Only a few hundred works of art that were generated in the millions on screens in the early 80s got fixed and printed on Kodak paper so we have at least screenshots of them and even fewer plots of computer drawings on paper made in the late 70s are conserved properly. Within the Recode project, initiated at MIT, some backcoding happens now to gain an understanding of the first steps. Most of the pioneers of Digital Art don't live any longer so it gets difficult to find the algorithm that was once used to create the artwork.

So we struggle already after 50 years to look back at the origins. [More you find in *Programmed Faked Digital Art as museum project?* in *ExpoTime*, summer issue 2013, page 53-58 - use short-link <http://is.gd/recodeart> to get the PDF].

There is one exception: the first interactive art machine, named MONDRIAN, became a living Artefact. Designed in the year 1979 by Sergius Both aka Herbert W. Franke on a TI 99/4 home computer, it came on market in 1981. But the model vanished soon, as the Personal Computer was launched by IBM in 1982. In 2006, MONDRIAN was recoded on Windows XP. This



approaching Fractals by Gem Preiz

years to see the potential on a first level that was in this tool for automation and control. Also, in art there is a first level in the use of computers which

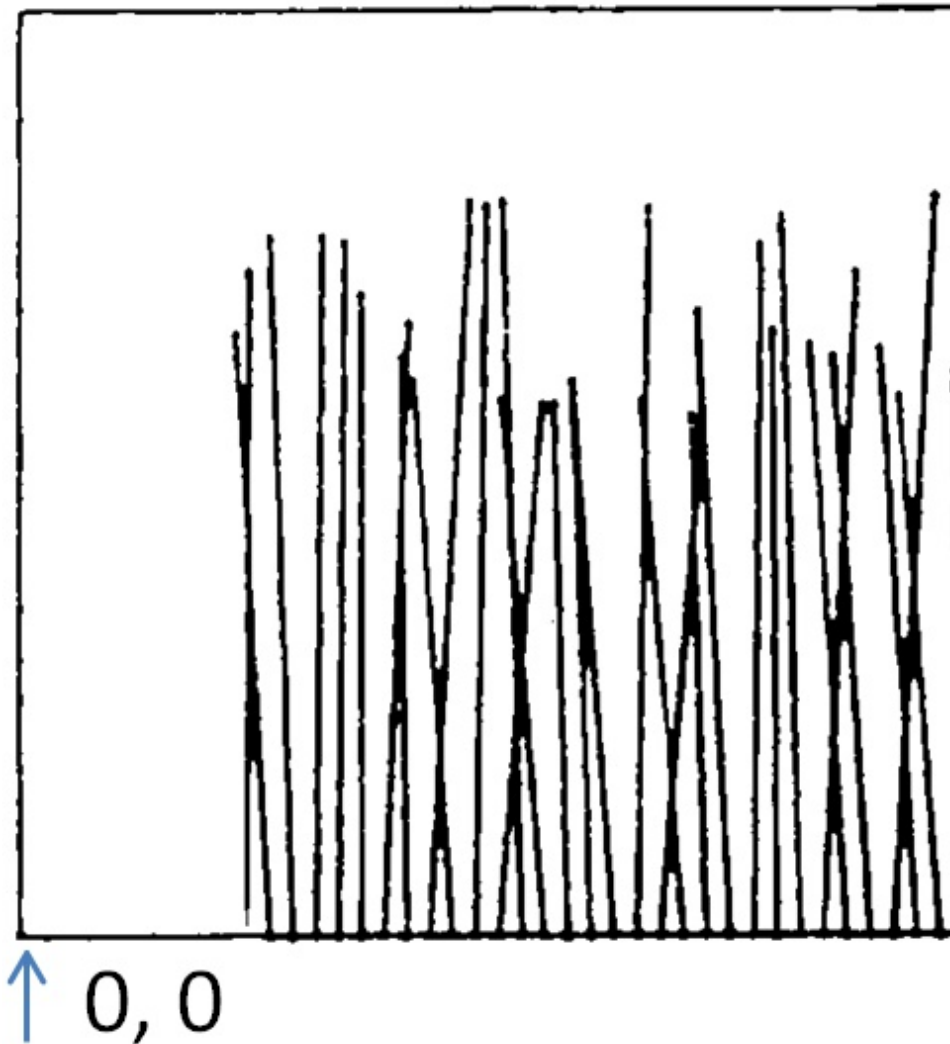
software creates boxes filled with colors in user controlled ways in two dimensions height and width. It is the first interactive Programmed Art system that is driven by keystrokes of the user and has degrees of randomness, meaning the unpredictability of the created output is a key part in the design.

Let's stay for a moment in the field of Programmed Art.

Programmed Art, also known by the German term "Softwarekunst," stands inside the genre of Digital Art mainly for the art of coding art. The word "Kunst" has gained use in Europe for raw art, often discussed controversial, see *New Slovenian Kunst: NSK*. The 3rd so-called *Rendez-Vous of NSK* happened in 2012 in the Museum of Modern Art New York. The entry about NSK in Wikipedia is worth reading as it points out some of the ideas in change of art creation and reception.

There is Randomness in the world and to bring unpredictability into the generation of art is one of the most triggering ways in digital creations. Back in the late 70s, I was thinking about how to bring the ways of programming into the education of up and coming art teachers. They believed me when I said, "Look at my mark in math at school, really not the best. Believe me, you will learn and do great with programming art." And they did. We made

drawings on paper with a plotter, giving the results nice names like *Grass in the Wind*. Very simple to program, just lines where the top of the lines get a little random position. More random-



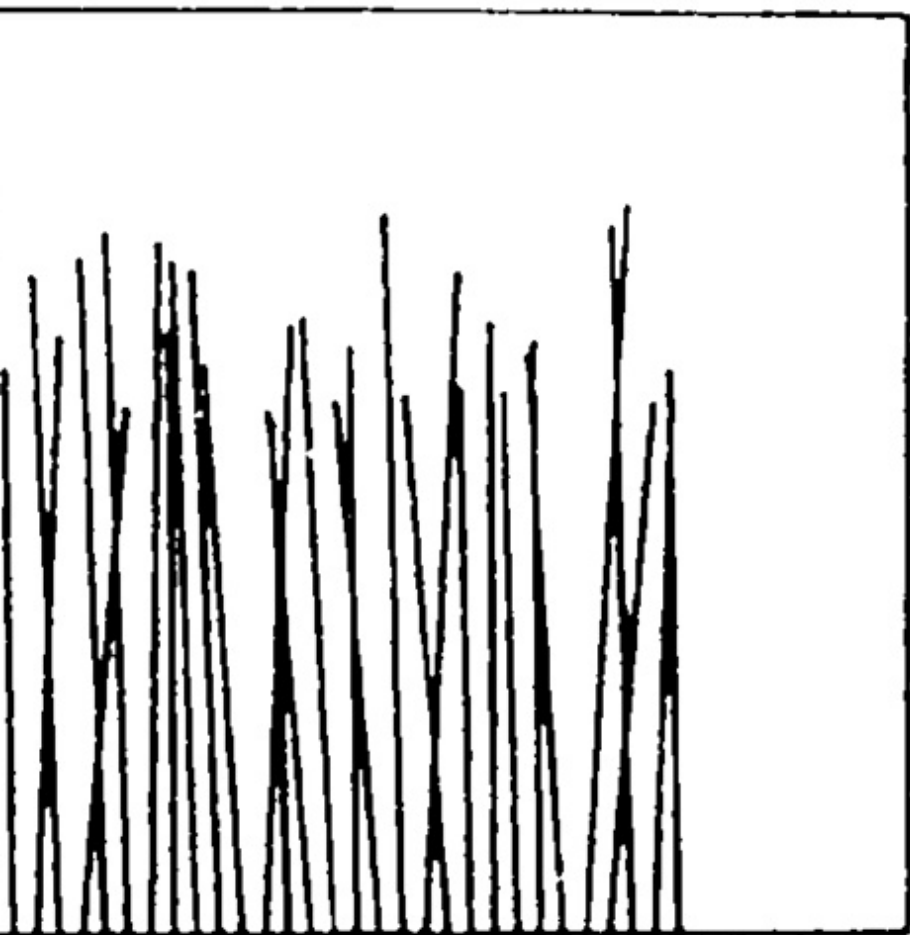
CODE FOR 'GRASS IN THE WIND' IN FOR

```
CALL SHEET (80., 40.) // create and
DO 144 K = 10, 70, 1 // increase ce
X=K // transfer the
CALL MOVETO (X, 0.) // move pen u
X=RANDOM (X-2., X+2.) // old value o
Y=RANDOM (22., 32.) // take as Y a
CALL DRAWTO (X, Y) // move pen c
144 CONTINUE // 144 is just a
END // loop last ru
```

© Lothar Limbeck, Reiner Schneeberger
Lehrbuch Computergrafik, Ernst Reinhardt
München 1979, p. 199

ness comes when the wind is stronger.

And on very strong winds we got pure Random Art. We created knots in the universe. We won prizes in interna-



ORTAN IV [1978]

plot a drawing area of 80 cm [x] x 40 cm [y]
all K from 10 to 70 in steps by +1 until label 144
the value of K to cell X
up and head to position [x], [y] and wait
if X gets modified by a dice in range of -2 to +2
random number between 22 and 32
down and draw to this position a line
a label for begin and end of a loop area
on K=70, then END

Verlag

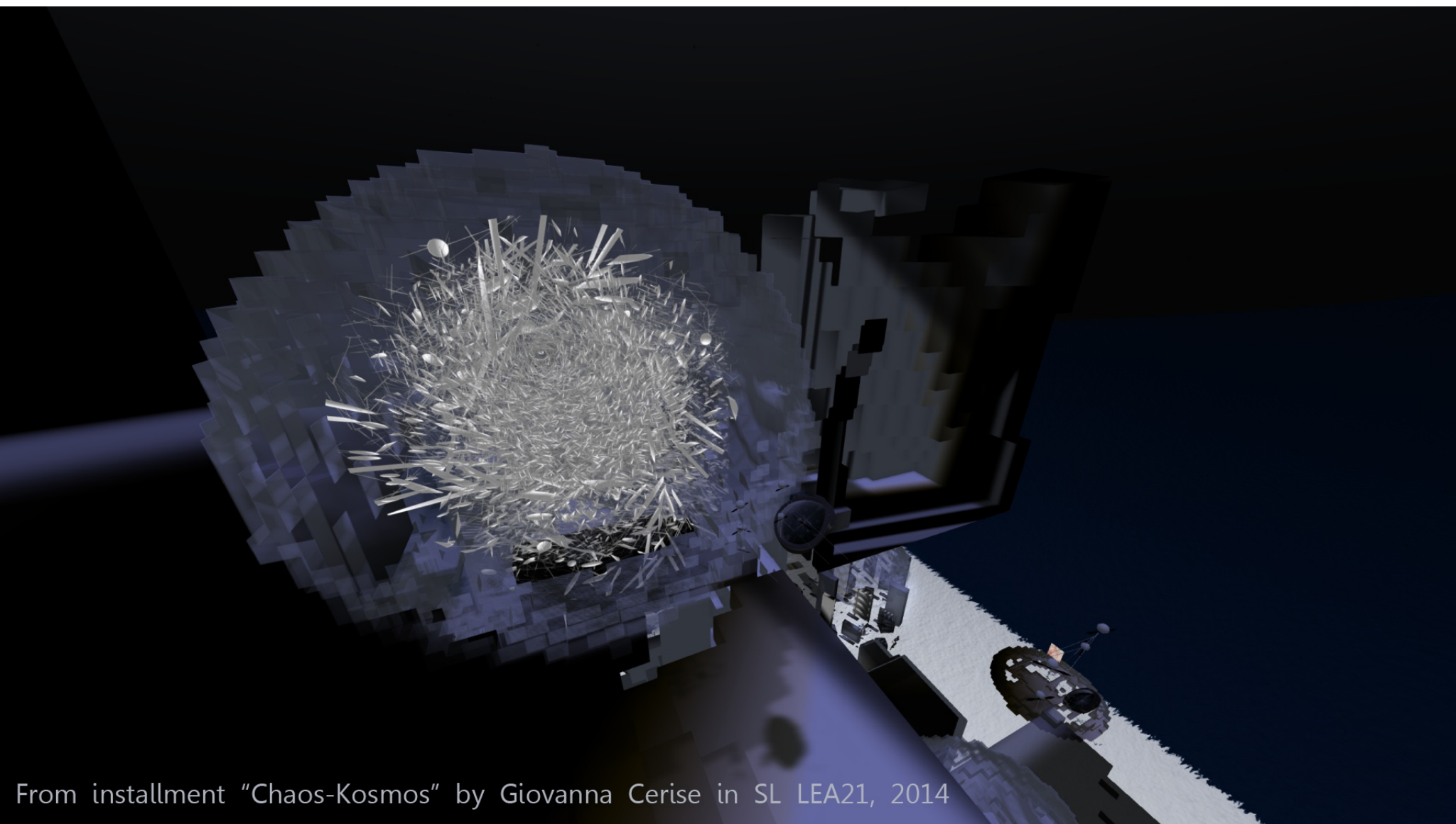
tional competitions. *From Square Structures to Pure Chaos* was one of our installations. Very simple to make just by variations of parameters. Parameter Art was born and published as a generic way to interact with the computer in an art process. The job of the user is just to select from what is presented, what is made by the computer based on the degrees of freedom given in the code and the interaction in selecting values. By pointing on an outcome, it will be declared to be art. By skipping it, it goes to rubbish. My “users” at this time have been students of art at the University of Munich, so we could claim that we are users of a special kind; we are born artists by blood and brain. All students had passed an assessment for art studies in painting, as this is tradition before you move to a master class in art. We selected as a group digital artworks to find ways for a scientific approach to cybernetic aesthetics. Eye movement research was done by looking on art to predict an outcome for machine-generated beauty. We have been pioneers, not knowing where this will lead to. Social media, social art and products like Oculus RIFT, all such stuff was still 30 years ahead. A recode of the old code we setup in the late 70s look now transferred to modern Sketch language, like Processing, like a bunch of silly lines too simple to be called art. Everyone in ground school is able to perform such experiments now.

Time Jump

These days now are again a time for the pioneers, for users creating worlds inside the computer in walkable 3-dimensional environments.

I was lucky that in the year 2009, Daniel Jung, in virtual worlds now

a gallery in Second Life. He invited avatars to have a look and discuss them and bring these doings back to the screens as “I in 3D.” In a final round, we set up avatars looking at art and themselves. Some documents published in 2009 show the first attempts to see avatars as art, as art agents showing the beauty of the first stage in walk-



From installment “Chaos-Kosmos” by Giovanna Cerise in SL LEA21, 2014

known as Met Knelstrom and Art Eames, asked to join my lab, as he did not feel ready to study at a university after he finished high school. He wanted to learn some practical things in new media first and then decide on further steps. So he started on my advice with some “ready to use” programs to create fractal art, which we placed in

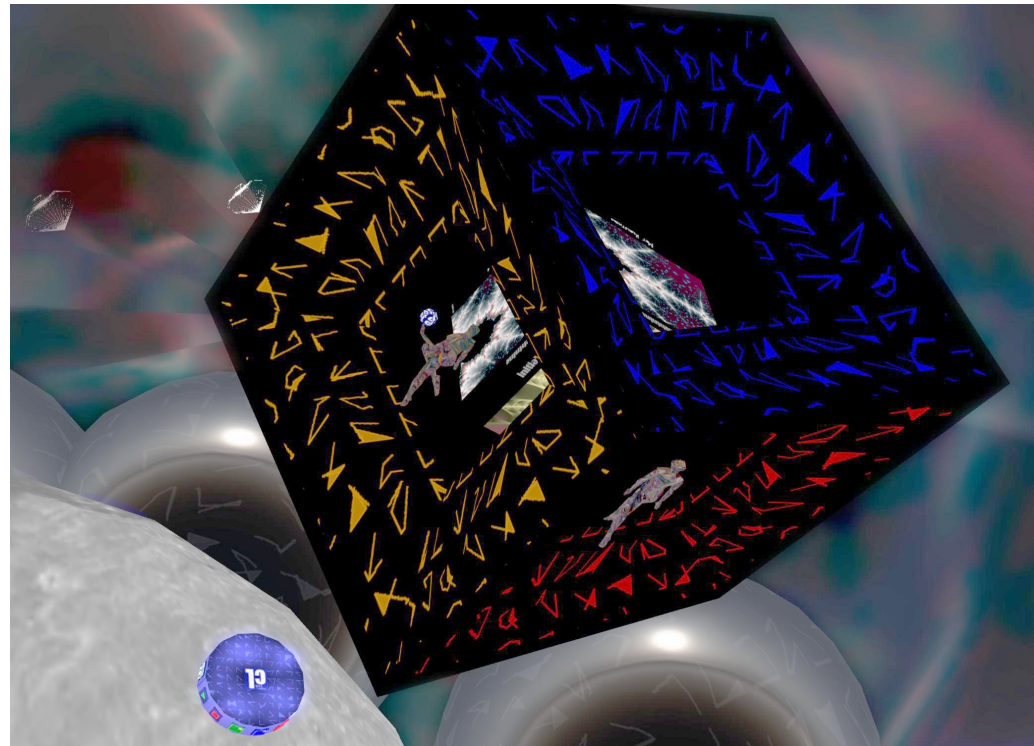
able 3d-environments. [About “I in 3D” at the University of Malta, you get via this shortlink <http://is.gd/3dmalta> the PDF of the exhibition catalogue in St. James Cavalier].

I asked the best agencies in SL to send their prize-winning models to the gallery nicely dressed and let them talk.

Now six years later, it became a stunning memory of these times where the hype of Second Life was at its peak. When you look now in the MOON-REZZER, you will find among eleven others installments “I in a box” made by Met Knelstrom, who has now finished his studies of informatics and logistics with a paper on the use of open 3d systems in political informatics, initializing and filling the German term “Politikinformatik” with practical content [title: “Impact and Economical Advantages of Visualizing Civic Activism” to get a B.Sc. at the University of Economics and Law Berlin - shortlink <http://is.gd/cimpact> to the PDF].

“I in a box” shows on a rotating cube six of the samples we presented in 2009 - - this time models made by Fuschia Nightfire are looking into the inner cube standing on a bar outside of a bigger cube that carries Elementary Signs as a texture. These Elementary Signs are from 1982, as I was invited to contribute to the art books Design Education and Experiment Design [both by Igildo G. Biesele] to show the first works of Programmed Art ever made on digital screens with a color depth of 256. This was the beginning of the PC age and digital screens had a resolution of regular 640x480 pixels. I had at Control Data Corporation the chance to get a 1024x768 pixel resolution monitor and so these Elementary Signs are now a true artefact.

The gift of Met Knelstrom carries a span of 30 years of Programmed Art in



one piece. When you click on the inner cube with your mouse, it animates the cube and the talk of the art models about what they had seen and felt by standing in front of the fractals in the year 2009 comes to display. The series of fractals tells a story of creation. That's why we called the 26 finally selected artworks a series of the Genesis in the Third Grid.

MONDRIAN 3D

I would feel like something was missing inside the gift of the Moon if not a single one of the core ideas of my mentor Herbert W. Franke were inside. Kron Kronfeld (aka Konrad Kunze) working from 2006 to 2008 in my lab, nowadays developing software for natural speech recognition, took the challenge to bring MONDRIAN from

2-dimensions in 1979 to the 3-dimensional virtual world in the 21st century. Daniel Jung implemented in his gift "I in a box" a small simplified MONDRIAN cube machine where you can control by clicks: color, cube size and transparency of the generated cubes. The gift gives a working picture of the concept of random generated parameter art. All you have to do is click on the model holding some cubes up in the air and experiment with the control disk that comes with the creator's link. There is also a notecard provided where you find an additional explanation.

The IMMERSIVIA View

The process of expansion in the use of computers gets now on a second level. Boundaries seen in the past are vanishing. In one word: NO LIMITS. As I said at the beginning, we need a new language for this - - a language that can handle an immersive interactive art experience. I am happy that I don't need to point to the Golden Beetle, as it might be needed in 100 years when our followers try to understand what we have now - - for them, ours being an ancient technology. I can show you now the very first steps in this level as the announced reward.

I invite you to log in to Second Life now and teleport to LEA14. And I make it simple. Take the gift of the day

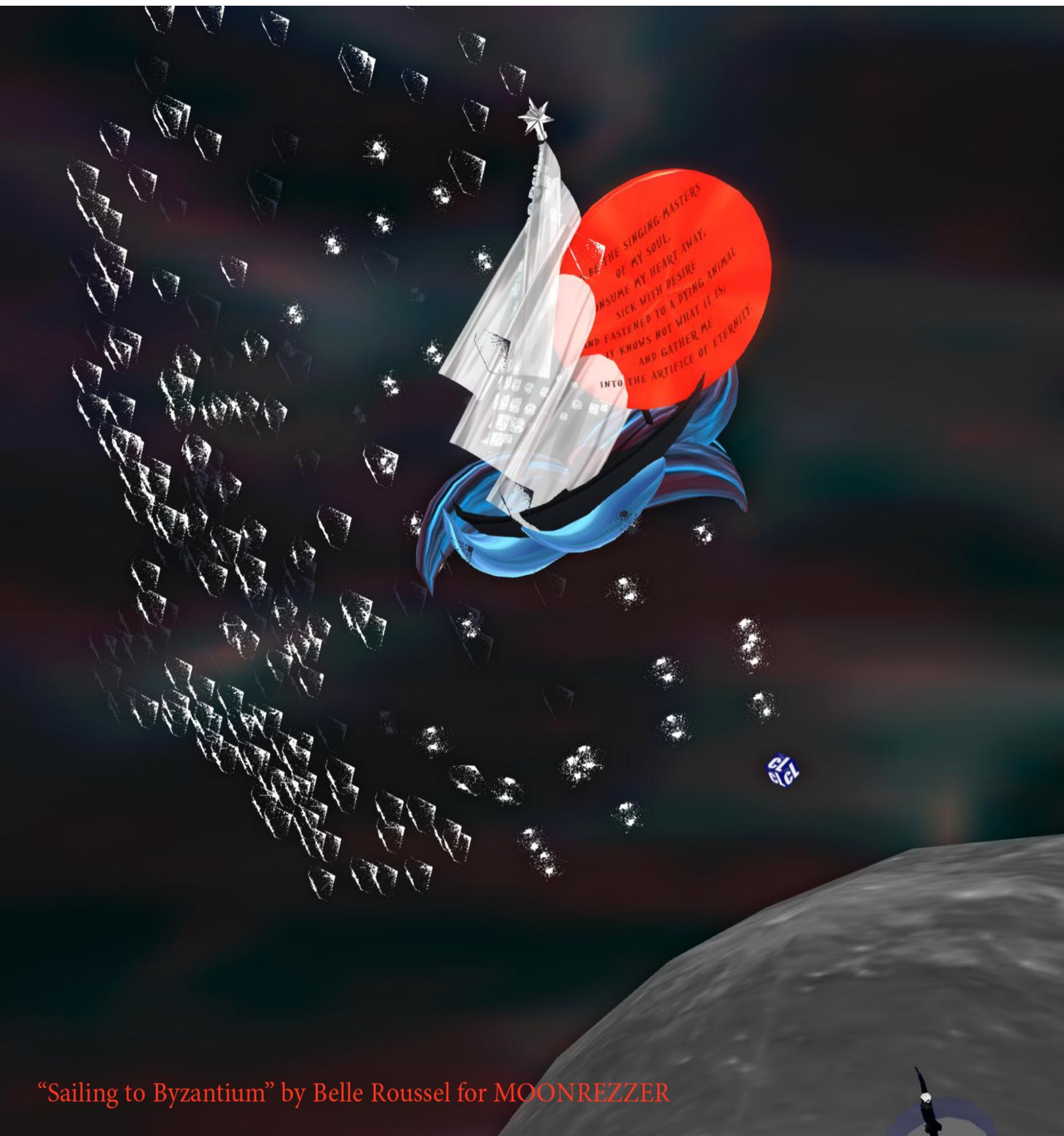
- - the location you see at the landing point - - unpack and wear it at the little sandbox there. Each day there is a different one. For the loyal readers of rez, there is a special gift in addition to getting a sneak preview before the Grand Opening, when I will make the gift available to everyone. The gift was made by Bryn Oh for the MOONREZZER and is called *Nightmare*. Join the *rez Magazine* group or activate the group if you are already in to get the gift delivered.

Then, wearing the selected gift as attachment on root [or center], zoom with your camera to get the full picture and wait. Set your graphics preferences on maximum. The sphere you hold will open after a while and show the piece of art that was hidden inside for 30 seconds. If you click on the creator link box that comes with each gift, the closing of the cube will be delayed for another 30 seconds. There is more to tell in part two of this story. Amazing things are inside the gifts. I shall mention that the gifts have a life span. Just one of them has not. My tribute to the owl in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. The only non-human AI ever coded by Tyrell Corporation with no embedded end date. You may have read this line in rez and the regular readers know that I speak of Neruval. Neruval might be the hidden love of the editor of *rez Magazine* Jami Mills as she never forgets to feed him when we meet - - so

Neruval shall deserve an endless life in your hands.

A gift of the Moon is like a headpiece or let's say you may wear it like hair

you bought in a shop and so you need no land to let the effect happen [but you need script running allowance on the land you are standing on].



If you don't have a chance to get now one of the gifts and to explore it, then watch one of the short videos at YouTube before you go on. I recommend starting with the video, *Nightmare* <http://youtu.be/GIvKOwPWmkM>, as there is also at <http://moonrezzer.com> some text about it.

Now you shall be ready again to move on in the story with words written in the universal language of imagination.

The Art in a Simulator

We head to a new form of art, art that exists in a simulator, only in it. You have to immerse yourself into the worlds inside. The art there is called virtual art, but it is less virtual for us as the hieroglyphs in old Egypt. We don't know their creation, and how The Golden Beetle once got real to be noted this way, to be engraved in stone for eternity. The passion and expertise in this doing stands for art, art of the ancestors. The hieroglyphs we can explore by a direct look at them. For virtual art we need a viewer, software, a monitor, a mouse, a keyboard. But will we need these tools in some years?

A plugin to our brain might be too scary, but a head-mounted display, an Oculus RIFT, and a mesh-human body suit with sensors sound not too far in the distance. Then art beyond the boundaries of gravity will be generated.

We will see and immerse and we will become art. We are able to construct ourselves for others to immerse. The art experience will become real inside us, immersive interactive on a speed that fits to our main receptors: eye, ear, nose, muscles. IMMERSIVIA, the name of this age. We will live as beautiful entities in the simulator. We will be art. How will this happen? I shall bring

For virtual art, we need
monitor, a mouse, a keyboard,
we need these tools

a word back that was said in *The Next Blue Screen of the Future*: "... a white body falls down on the blue screen being smashed into shards of broken mirror's glass, and I hear the words as an echo of the past ..." [rez Magazine, October 2014, page 60]. We will forget in time that the time in the simulator is lent. But what about the beginning of these steps? Will anyone remember them?

That's why a new language is needed, as things will turn upside down. It is the language of the Moon. It is the time when the "Still Not Known One" has to speak and to rez the moon, to rez it again and again, to keep the memory alive. In the books of the Priest Kings it is said there will be three moons. In the

solar system of Alpha Centauri there are 14 moons and Polyphemus is the most well-known one. There live the Na'vi in harmony with nature and art. Typical for them is the blue skin. You have seen the movie Avatar so you shall know about the magic of this moon.

Our moon of art is called Moonrezzer. This moon shall run and never stop

ed a viewer, software, a keyboard. But will we s in some years?

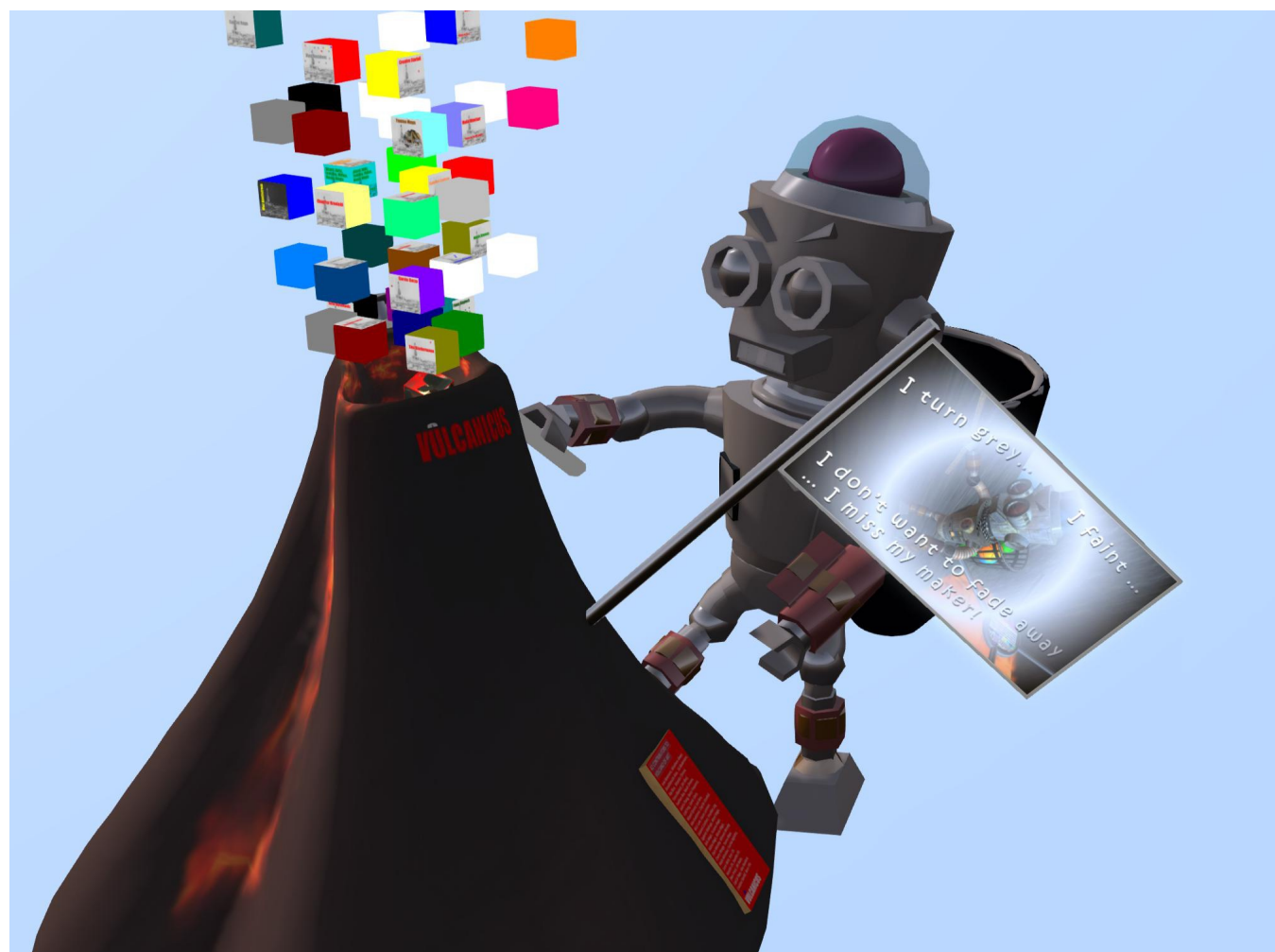
running to keep the memory of the past for future generations alive. That's why the moon travels to the end of June 2015 in Second Life to a world called Opensimulator. In fact, the moon is already there. It was brought back to the place where the tools of creation once have been developed. A grant by Linden Endowments for the Arts made it possible. I have to thank the committee for the trust to give my quite uncommon ideas a chance to bring them to a reality that can be experienced by the quite big art community in Second

Life. The members are Honour McMillan, Jayjay Zifanwe, LaPiscean Liberty, Oberon Onmura, PatriciaAnne Daviau, Quan Lavender, Solo Mornington.

Many of the first creators have been forgotten, users not logged in for years, leaving creations behind that once had been state of the art. One of them is Feathers Boa. You even can't find her any longer in search if she is not on your personal friends list. I have her Lil Angry Robot in my art conservation capsule. It is quite emotional when you read her words as she gave the tiny robot to me to take good care of him

<http://feathersboa.vulcanicus.com> . It is a very famous robot as he is the main actor in Chantal Harvey's movie made for David Lynch's video award *Good Day Today* <http://genero.tv/davidlynch>.

Also, this robot offered once partnership in InworldZ [an opensim world]



which was sadly not accepted due to technical faults, but the memory of this stays alive in him and the person addressed will always remember how bright her smile was as she posted the received proposal in Facebook. Much more should be added on the lost and forgotten creators. Very normal for a technology *in statu nascendi*. To sneak in, to get to know, and then to leave is nothing bad. When you are a student, or feel like one, you shall be encouraged to experiment and then find your path. Maybe you will be discovered later and become famous for what you have done, as you have been young and fearless.

The Inner Moon

The “Still Not Known One” has many names, like in old Egypt where there have been many names for the Gods. One of them is “The No Longer Known One,” the last high developed Artificial Intelligence hiding himself in a Moon with a core of ice. Neruval says I shall bring an excerpt from *The Algebraist* [2004] written by Iain Banks to the surface and so I give word to the AI in the Moon:

“I was born in a water moon. Some people, especially its inhabitants, called it a planet, but as it was only a little over two hundred kilometres in diameter, 'moon' seems the more accurate term. The moon was made entirely of

water, by which I mean it was a globe that not only had no land, but no rock either, a sphere with no solid core at all, just liquid water, all the way down to the very centre of the globe...

For here, at the very centre of this watery globe, there seemed to be no gravity. There was colossal pressure, certainly, pressing in from every side, but one was in effect weightless...

This was of course, -"

- - the right place to hide art over ages from being hunted down. Forbidden art, art made by users long ago. The names of the users forbidden to speak out loud in the coming ages, all works on index. Users are not artists, they cannot be artists. Artists are chartered in the legion, they have grades, perform studies, are selected and elected to be in the honorable caste of artisans; they are called artificers. They are supervised by The Guild, once founded by Artefice Maximus III. You may have heard tales of The Guild Navigators who can bend time and space. They use the spice mélange harvested at planet Arrakis. You always need new words to put fresh meaning into them when technology steps forward. So why not to use the spice mélange when you donate as a world artificer your life, your existence to the arts, each heartbeat as you are in charge of creating worlds?

To be a world artificer is not risk-free.
One single fault and your existence

Souls? Shall there not be portions left
behind before an artisan steps in a

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ends suddenly. You are the first in a world you create and when the simulator sucks, you're stuck. You just don't come back. Your name gets on the list of "missing in action" and your relatives get the medal of spice. The engineers say in some future time such an artisan who is stuck in the simulator might get recovered, but they don't know for sure. You think a backup shall be done before the artisan enters a new world creation so a reload of an artisan missing in action can easily be performed? I am sure you did not think this option as you are smart, a smart reader of rez would not think so as this backup would be a different Ident Unit. Assigned a new UUID, a clone you may say in biological term this backup-ed one will be. The original one stays stuck inside the world created.

But what about the tellings of Dr. Michael Newton about the Journey of

newly made world? This might become the most important question in future times when electronic identities think about their existence and create by themselves new forms of simulators. We, of course, will never be able to understand these worlds. Maybe only tales in the way of *Darmok and Jalad at Tangara* [rez Magazine, December 2014, *The Dream Machine*, page 58] will be a way to come closer. But even when you immerse deep in such tales you don't get an understanding in rational terms.

The question was whether the electronic identities will keep parts of themselves back when they enter their creation. Maybe it is not fun. It gives no thrill at all when you remember. This is Dr. Newton's saying that a soul has to forget its origin when going on a travel to earth or to another planet where worthwhile things happen that need to

be explored and enhanced. Then we touch the Golden Nugget given by the Golden Beetle and the circle of understanding closes, giving a full picture for the loyal readers of *rez*. You might see the charming connection and as well the struggle inside the brain when you scroll in the so-called “Real Life profiles” of an avatar. Or is it the soul longing to find the Golden Nugget, and at the same time too scared of getting the gift of being recognized?

Some Examples of Profiles, Taken in 2015:

What stays in SL stays in SL. When I log off it is all fading away. RL and SL shall never meet. No cam, no pics. Verified female. I will not ask you, so don't ask me. Only schizophrenic people differ between RL and SL. I look like the singer ... in real life, but I am born ... years earlier. This section is only for my dearest ones. I have nothing to hide. I am genuine in all worlds.

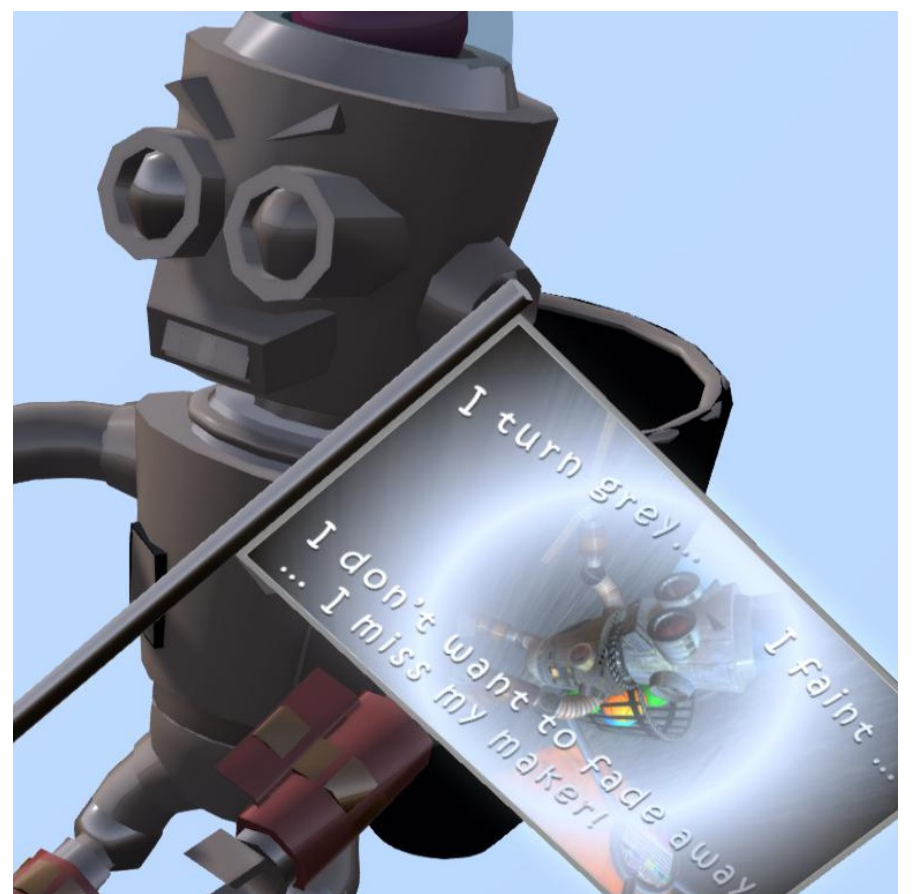
Will the two sides of one medal become meaningless in the future? Will you be what you want to be and all others see only this side, as you can code it and leave the old code behind?

The Invite

Be invited to the Grand Opening of the Moon at LEA 14. See the Moon rezzing. Look back to ancient times of

Rome, the glory of the Games. Then look up and see Prof. Moriarty and Countess Regina Bartholomew traveling in space in a ship in a bottle heading to Miles II, which might be for them the destination Moonrezz. Join them for a short trip and then enter the moon, the core of ice. Meet the Algebraist. Maybe you will get inspired to become a game designer of a new kind, as this is the name of a world artificer in our time.

Then you might faint as you see your personal dreams come true in telepathic ways as the second part of the MOONREZZER enters SOLARIS. Time to wait for one month as this story goes on.



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SNEAK PREVIEW OF PART TWO

The Moonrezzer presents some Artefacts out of the first episode of immersive art reaching back to the first creations based on prims [2003-2013]. The total collection is kept in VULCANICUS, a time capsule for art made in prims and sculpts. The Moon, it is a rezzer for it, for some selected art and it comes with a performance to enhance the experience. A few technologies are combined to make a theatrical play and show happen.

Nightmare by Bryn Oh





photography

jami mills





ba
an in
Star

i nightfire

interview with
gazer Daylight

photography by Jami Mills

To be a part of SL is to be a part of another world, where you can go and be anything you want, even just to see what that is like. The popularity of SL may wax and wane, but the creativity of the platform is unmatched.

To be a part of the fashion world can be a simple thing and it can be like a full time job, sometimes without much in return. If you have product to sell, be it clothes or shoes, hair or nails, jewelry or accessories, shapes or skins, even eyelashes or makeup, there is opportunity to make some money, at least Lindens. Certainly the famous land owning gods and goddesses have proved the benchmark is very high.

But then there are those who start late or who are goal-oriented a different way, whether that be to find personal fulfillment, make a name for themselves, or some loftier goal. Along these lines, there are models and others, designers and creators, who are creators for the sake of it, or who ply their skills to raise funds for noble charities, or who seek to help those coming up behind. In a way, SL is a much more charitable structure than RL. People tend to be more helpful because it is, after all, a virtual experience.

Bai Nightfire has made a splash recently. She is not just an avatar but now a person who has tried to increase Asi-

an influence in SL, not with a list of demands but rather just by being herself. For SL may tend to be more weighted to Caucasians, or Americans, to specific classes of people, even as it really reflects a broad gamut of countries and cultures, ethnicities and eccentricities. And I want to emphasize that no one should, in my honest opinion, look at things from a cultural bias only. That is what is so great about SL. At the same time, though, it is important to balance the representations in SL, as in RL. No agenda, just consideration, no quota. Just mindfulness.

So I opened my interview with Bai Nightfire knowing this consideration. Please join me in the journey through the day I met Nightfire. (Interesting aside, this is my second interview with someone named Nightfire, as I had the good fortune to meet Fuschia Nightfire some time ago).

StarGazer Daylight: To begin with, you have so much in your SL history, I could throw a dart and land somewhere interesting, but let me first ask you about what got you into modeling to begin with.

Bai Nightfire: I thought I always looked amazing. I mean, I have always styled, tried out new looks, tried my best to look amazing, but nothing like all of this. And when the Miss Model International contest came up, I just had to

try it.

StarGazer Daylight: I know you do look amazing (your word), but I do agree. When did you get this look thing down? And was it a great bit of work or not?

Bai Nightfire: I have always worked on my look in virtual worlds. Even back in 1997, when I played *Ultima Online* and then *Everquest* a little later, I always wanted to look my best. Oh, it always was a great deal of work. Some of the games and worlds I was in had very limited features to customize your look.

StarGazer Daylight: Did you look as good as you do now early on in SL or only recently?

Bai Nightfire: I thought I did a good job always after I learned the basic ways to change your appearance. At least I think so. Others along the way saw it too.

StarGazer Daylight: Were you interested in modeling early on or just recently?

Bai Nightfire: More recently. I always thought about it, but the main reason I never did was that I wanted to be me. I did not want to change my shape to the common "tall, thin model" look. After learning some more about modeling, I know why that shape is used. But I still love my little Bai shape.

StarGazer Daylight: Yes, I understand. May I ask, if you know, how tall is your Bai shape?



Bai Nightfire: Right now, 6 feet 6 inches. The same as I was during MMI. Although my formal final shape was a tiny bit taller.

StarGazer Daylight: Haha! That was great. Instant answer. Good for you.

I say this because it was that spontaneous. It was a sit-down interview and she immediately got up to check her appearance and give me the answer. She was direct and very willing and able to give me an immediate and correct answer. That is always good when putting together a story about someone. I should note too that the flattery and confidence were not pretentious, but just the accurate portrayal of a lovely and now successful SL model/avatar. But do stick around for additional details.

StarGazer Daylight: Is your smaller height an advantage or not?

Bai Nightfire: I'm not sure, to be honest. Some seem to like it and, well, I'm sure there are those who don't as well.

StarGazer Daylight: Bai, how many years of your SL life have you been modeling then? Just this past year?

Bai Nightfire: Oh, only a few months really. But I have been styling and paying attention to the little details all of my SL life.

Stargazer Daylight: You have such a beautiful avatar, I am going to ask you what are some of your fashion and beauty secrets. Not all, but at least please share a few.

Bai Nightfire: I guess a main one is if you find something better USE IT. Don't hold on to something for nostalgia sake. I throw away skins and hairs quickly if I see one that fits my look better.

StarGazer Daylight: As models are a reference for fashion and beauty, you are also a role model for so many women. What must a model know to begin with and what should always stay in his/her head along the path to work and success?

Bai Nightfire: Be confident in who you are and in your look. Know what the job is. Are you selling yourself (in a competition), or are you selling the look or the outfit (a typical show)? Both might seem similar but they are showing a different side of you.

StarGazer Daylight: I know a lot of ladies have problems with beauty in SL. I will ask you to please let us know what were one or two of the biggest problems you had to overcome?

Bai Nightfire: My biggest problem is that a lot of times I know what I want in my head but cannot find the item in SL. Marketplace is a great help, but the



search function could be much better. Another common problem is alphas that do not fit properly. A lot of times you can edit your body shape to fix it, but sometimes the alpha is just shaped wrong. In that case, I use other alphas in my inventory to fit the outfit in question. It usually works, as I have a TON of alphas.

StarGazer Daylight: When you search the Marketplace, do you generally find the things you want there? And do you every contact designers to get what you are looking for?

Bai Nightfire: Yes, I do use Marketplace a lot, but lately I have been looking more in SL itself. I mainly used MP because I get awful lag sometimes.

StarGazer Daylight: In SL, you mean?

Bai Nightfire: And some of these big store are very bad.

StarGazer Daylight: I know.

Bai Nightfire: So it's easier just to search MP instead of going to a laggy store. As for contract work, no I haven't really done that yet. I have been thinking about it though.

StarGazer Daylight: So let me delve into your beautiful lashes. How do you get your eyelashes to fit perfectly? This is a common problem. Which have you had

the most success with? Mon Cheri, LeLutka, Redgrave, Miamai?

Bai Nightfire: I used to use Miamai the most. In fact, I used them for years I think.

StarGazer Daylight: They are quite popular. What do you prefer now? And how again do you get them so perfect?

Bai Nightfire: Then I found Gaeline. It comes with a HUD. It's pretty easy.

StarGazer Daylight: Great. The HUD idea really seems to help in other areas too . . . shoes, clothes.

Bai Nightfire: Oh, yes. But of course sometimes your eye just is the wrong shape, and then you have to do other adjustments.

StarGazer Daylight: Any other tips on lashes?

Bai Nightfire: Hmmm ... Nah. I'm quite happy with the way these work. It's nice to have a HUD to ensure proper fitting in either size or position although I easily forget having to remove each eyelash.

This may not seem to be a big issue for some, but if you ever have had to fiddle with eyelashes, I think you will well understand why this was an important area to talk about.



StarGazer Daylight: Who are a few of your preferred designers for clothes, makeup, hair, shoes, skin (if you can share that)?

clothes. Madrid Solo for makeup. Ploom and Truth for hair. Shoes I like would be N-Core and Gos. And for skin I like Glam Affair and Pink Fuel.

Bai Nightfire: Gizza and Coldlogic for

StarGazer Daylight: As a model you

have had some good successes. What are the ones that make you most proud?

Bai Nightfire: My most proud achievement was when I got to the final five in Miss Model International. I gave it my all in the semi-final and it paid off. I dressed like Bai, went out there, was confident in what I was doing (in this case I did a dance routine with poses mixed in) and moved on to the finals. I felt soooo good afterwards.

StarGazer Daylight: What did that mean for you and what did you do to achieve the results you got?

Bai Nightfire: Up until MMI, I had never considered a contest based on fashion. I entered that one because of the whole premise of being YOU. So in this case I literally realized that it was easier. I was not trying to be a model. I was ME. I was Bai.

StarGazer Daylight: Please tell me a little bit about MMI, besides the individualistic emphasis. Who runs it and for how long, if you know?

Bai Nightfire: Well, Ava Jhamin and Cacilia McMasters of L'Amour Productions decided to do a different contest.

StarGazer Daylight: Are they your managers now?

Bai Nightfire: Well, I am a model in

their agency now, after I was in a show of theirs following MMI. They wanted us to be ourselves. Then each event in MMI was different. We did a "pose off" event which was done in rounds. It was sort of like the NCAA basketball tournament - - 1 vs 1. The loser sat down and the winner moved on to the next round.

StarGazer Daylight: Interesting.

Bai Nightfire: This part was all about the poses - - who looked the best posing with their chosen theme. The second event the next week was a trunk challenge where runners gave us boxes of stuff from two designers that we had to use in the stylings, three items from two boxes. We had to make an outfit, so I did a swimsuit look with flowers. In that case the items were not optimal, haha!

StarGazer Daylight: Of course.

Bai Nightfire: The third event was a partner challenge where we had to pick a couple and then fit the look of them and then decide how to present it. Cyberdawg Foxclaw and I chose to be Frank n Furter and Columbia from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. So it wasn't a standard competition.

StarGazer Daylight: That must have been funny. If you have any pictures to share that would be great!

Bai Nightfire: Sure hold on. There you go.

Once again excited and yet producing instant results.

Here is that picture:



StarGazer Daylight: Tysm.

Bai Nightfire: That was a partner picture challenge where we just took a picture of us in our outfits for that challenge. Then a makeup photo chal-

lenge, too. The picture is on my Flickr page with the robotic head and the red planet in the background.

StarGazer Daylight: Distinctive. A bit like Queen Amidala in Star Wars.

Bai Nightfire: Yes, I suppose so. The last event before the choosing of the top five men and women was a BE YOU event. I dressed up like Bai does when I go out to a club, but with a little more flair, and did a dance routine with poses. After that, I found out I was in the top five women and would be in the finals. That outfit was also my official MMI picture.

StarGazer Daylight: You became 3rd runner up, which is great. Quite an accomplishment.

Bai Nightfire: Well, when I started I did not know how far I would go, so I was happy to go as far as I did. I thought I did great.

StarGazer Daylight: Where there any prizes in particular?

Bai Nightfire: For the winner there

were lots prizes, interviews, gift cards - - all sorts. But that wasn't the reason I did MMI.

StarGazer Daylight: Not that important. Did you get the modeling contract because of your excellent finish?

Bai Nightfire: It's possible, but soon after MMI was over I cast for a L'Amour show and got it and then did my job in the show.



photo provided by Bai Nightfire

https://www.flickr.com/photos/lam-our_model_management/

StarGazer Daylight: Do you have more shows lined up yet? Or other work?

Bai Nightfire: Well, because of the power outage I had, I am a little behind in things. I am catching up this week really. I do model at Glint Jewelry right now, too.

StarGazer Daylight: Great. I am glad that you are working then.

Bai Nightfire: Smiles. Thank you.

If I may note, Bai had a power outage that almost made us miss getting this interview in time for my deadline at

rez. Fortunately, she found a way around it at a friend's house and then things returned to normal. I highlight this because we all are, after all, subject to the realities and stresses of RL. Even though SL is a bit of a fantasy world, RL does creep in when it wishes.

StarGazer Daylight: Any particular people who helped that you wish to credit at this point?

Bai Nightfire: Since I began modeling, Adrianna Coba, Ava Jhamin, Cyberdawg Foxclaw, Jaily Bailey, and Lady FalinaKatze.

StarGazer Daylight: Where do you see yourself going next as a model in SL?

Bai Nightfire: Right now I still have

much to learn. The modeling world is diverse and your particular style might fit better in some areas than others. I wish to try out a little bit of everything until I find my unique place. I think I have a unique look and that has a special place.

StarGazer Daylight: Your photos were absolutely magnificent on your Flickr page.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/130052236@N05/>

Along those lines, I note on your profile you wrote I love you in Chinese. May I assume you know some or are you fluent?

Bai Nightfire: Actually, I know very little. I wish to learn more and have started to but I really wasn't exposed to it much growing up.

StarGazer Daylight: Are you from China or is your family?

Bai Nightfire: No. We always lived in the U.S. I have a Chinese-American ancestry.

StarGazer Daylight: What does that mean for you as you identify so? Is the Asian culture, or specifically the Chinese culture, under-represented in SL in your opinion?

Bai Nightfire: Yes, I do feel it is under-represented. That was one of the main reasons I made Bai originally, and why I strive to look the best I can. I want to be Bai in SL.

StarGazer Daylight: What about your Asian identity? Does that seem to be working for you or not in SL?

Bai Nightfire: For me, I think I have done a great job of making my identity in SL. People have always said I am a great Asian avatar.

StarGazer Daylight: I am glad. Let me ask you about your name Bai. I did look it up and wondered which meaning it has for you? To worship seems the most common translation, but there are others.

Bai Nightfire: When I took it, I really just liked the the way it looked and sounded. I always did that with names. I never really tried to get meaning from names, more the way they sounded or looked.

StarGazer Daylight: OK. No connection to Bai Ling, the famous Chinese actress?

Bai Nightfire: Well, that was the original idea, and then I attributed Nightfire to it.

StarGazer Daylight: I wanted to ask you about your picture as Martial Artist Bai

on your profile. I just love that picture. Tell me a bit about it please.

Bai Nightfire: That was made by my Friend Tweeze tynen and it's actually done in Daz 3D but it was based on me. I was the inspiration I guess.

StarGazer Daylight: Do you do Martial Arts in SL or RL? What types if you do?

Bai Nightfire: No. I wish I did. In RL, I mean. In SL, I have tried to do some things with it. I tried to use some martial arts poses in the MMI challenges but most were totally static or part of a AO that didn't work well in a runway setting.

StarGazer Daylight: Is there much of a community here for that?

Bai Nightfire: Oh, there are battle and RP sims for that . I haven't gone yet, but I will soon, as something different to do.

StarGazer Daylight: Let us know when you do. Has SL met your goals and dreams so far?

Bai Nightfire: Yes. I have met many good friends and have been able to do what I set out to do. Be Bai here in SL.

StarGazer Daylight: What has been your greatest accomplishment in SL, in fashion or otherwise?

Bai Nightfire: I used to own a homestead sim where I learned how to build. Not mesh or anything neat like that but just classic prim buildings. I loved having a huge expanse of land to play with, like a little pile of blocks when I was a kid. I built clubs, houses, weird spacey things. Learning to build is my greatest accomplishment as it carries over to everything in SL. Editing, prim placement, making things that you cannot find anywhere else.

StarGazer Daylight: Tell me something about your top favorite group or two? When Bai comes on, what do you most like to do, other than what you have to do as a model and beauty queen?

Bai Nightfire: These days I have been mainly out dancing with friends at various clubs and at places where my DJ friends are.

StarGazer Daylight: Good. Always fun to hear music and dance. Are you mostly a day or night person?

Bai Nightfire: I am a night person. I think that is why I took the last name I did. I like the sounds of a summer night. Being by myself, thinking, wondering - - a shadow. But then night lights can be a frenzy of action.

StarGazer Daylight: You are a very interesting person, as you quote Star Trek and like quite a range of music. What do

you think would be a good adjective to describe you? You can pick more than one, of course.

Bai Nightfire: Eclectic, I think. I really like most everything and listen to almost any type of music or talk about most anything at some time. BTW, that quote was actually irrelevant to Star Trek. Yes that's where it was from but I was using it as a quote to go with the one before it.

StarGazer Daylight: Great choice. I like that one a lot.

Bai Nightfire: Always need a good conversation starter, right?

StarGazer Daylight: Yes! lol. I see you are easy to talk to. You are quite open, at least here and now. Is that your usual mode?

Bai Nightfire: Yes, I think so. I like to talk about all manners of things with friends and people that are interested.

StarGazer Daylight: That is a good quality, I'm sure you know.

Bai Nightfire: Smiles. Thank you.

StarGazer Daylight: I see you also have an interest in Garrett Hardin. Please share with us the best pearls or ideas he professes and tell us how that affects you?

Bai Nightfire: Well, the reason I put that in my profile is something I had always thought about since I read about it in college: the cultural capacity of the world. A lot of people keep saying how many people can the Earth hold? We use resources to measure this but no one takes into account the cultural ability of the world to hold that number. Yes, we can hold a great number but the quality of life will suffer.

StarGazer Daylight: Thank you. That is a very important issue, especially in the near future.

Bai Nightfire: That's what I get from that.

StarGazer Daylight: Good thoughts to ponder. Any parting thoughts you would like to leave with our readers?

Bai Nightfire: Yes. I would say to anyone that wants to, that thinks they can do something in SL but just need that little nudge to do so: do it! Like with MMI, I just decided that I could, so I did. No experience. Just some friends with me. And that's all I needed. Just be sure of yourself and you can do your best.

StarGazer Daylight: That is great.

I hope you enjoyed this long wandering journey from StarGazer Daylight into the world of Bai Nightfire.



I wanted to take a moment here to thank three very important people who have backed me in rez and made my writing so much easier. They are Jami Mills, Suki Rexen and Friday Blaisdale. These are exceptional women. And I am deeply grateful to them.

Until next time.

XO

StarGazer Daylight

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Say, River

by Will Blake

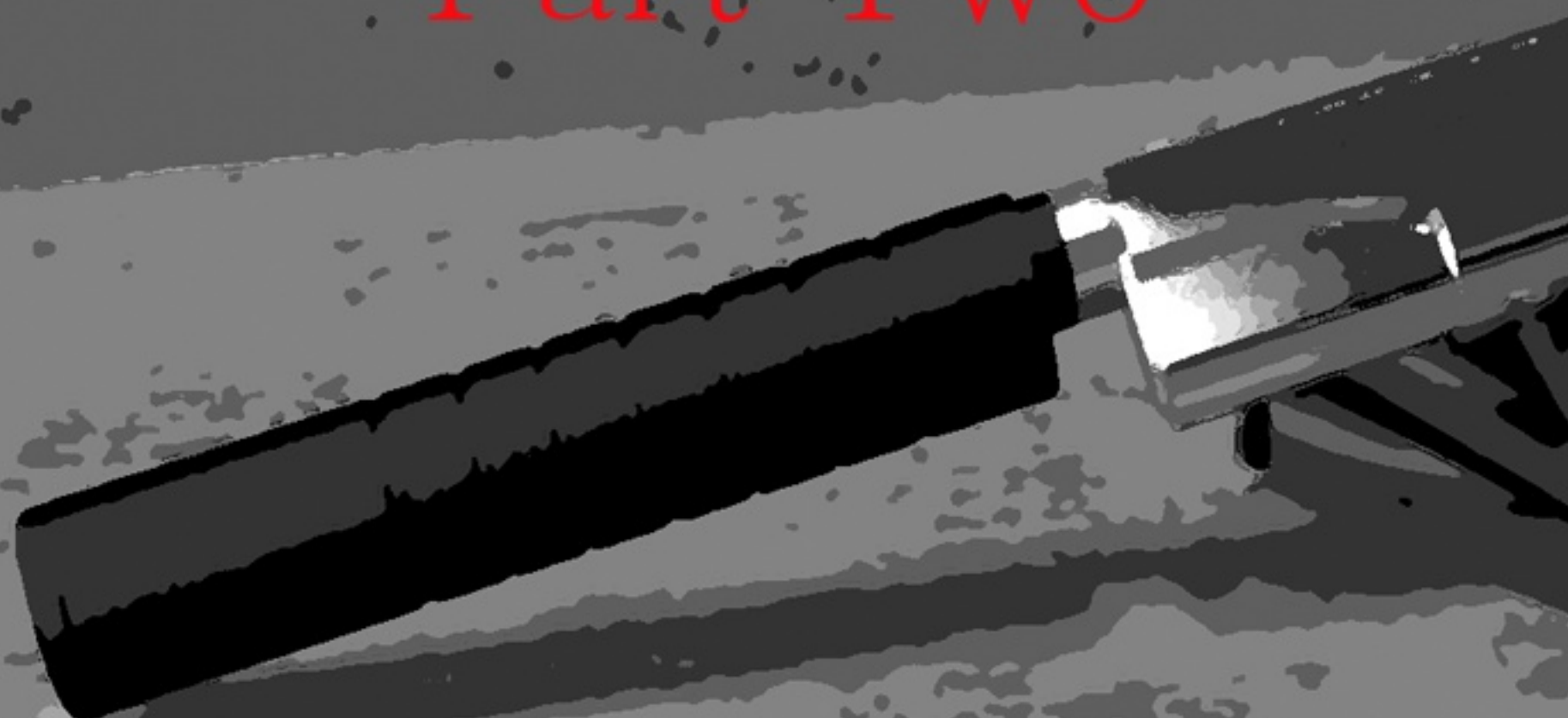
Who would have thought
a mist mere as breath
threading through dirt
could grow up
to be a flume
of shattered white orchids?

I pity the poor prophet
all wicker and drool,
I sluiced and sent to you
to die double-crossed
a mile shy
of the promised land.
I try.

I do my best work lying down.
I can kiss a desert until it blooms.
I cradled your keels,
I filled your cupped palms,
But what has it brought me
but the slow venom
of slithering indifference?

The Silence A

Part Two



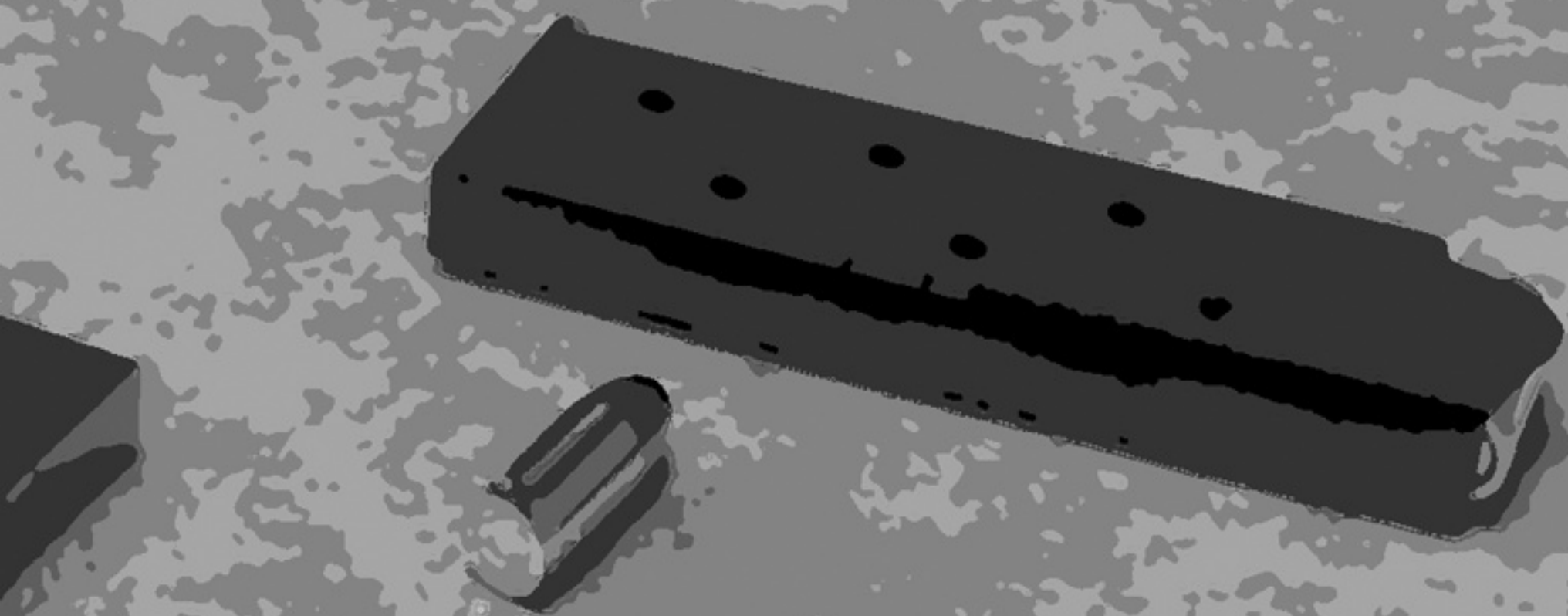
by E



image by Barh3DCG

After

Family Hamelin



Kyrenia Chandler had the subtle beauty of a woman 15 years her junior. Ink black hair cascaded to her shoulder blades. The subdued lighting of The Capitol Dome softened her features despite the stark profile of her long straight nose above slightly puffy lips and rounded chin, which she held slightly up to accent the stretch of her neck. The way she licks the salt from the rim of her Margarita glass; the poised way she sits on the barstool; the very presence she exudes announced Kyrenia's availability, Clarice thought. A seductress who creates the illusion of being the one seduced. Does that make her the prey or the hunter?

Kyrenia's off-shoulder red chenille top suggested more than announced ample breasts beneath. A long black skirt added elegance to the leanness of form on display. Nothing about her hinted that she had borne three children. Everything about her hinted at pleasures unrestrained. Clarice felt a small pang of jealousy that welled up from the youthfulness of a young woman maturing. She had had no trouble keeping the shape that emerged when she was 18 and the flesh was taut and jiggly. Ten years later, she needed extra effort to keep the threats of spreading and sagging at bay. With nothing to do but watch Kyrenia, Clarice could not help but wonder if she would be able to carry off such a presentation when she was 45 or would she require small en-

hancements to obliterate the wilting of age?

She took a sip of her mojito and decided such musing didn't matter. She might not be around when she was 45, a spirit broken, usefulness ended, an assignment gone sour. If she were around, then she would accept whatever changes had occurred.

The Capitol Dome hissed in a cacophony of conversation, laughter, and seduction. The air swirled in perfumes and colognes and alcoholic beverages. Most people seemed in their early 30s, that age when the next few years would bring rewarding advancements in life or leave one behind. The atmosphere confirmed the assessment of Central Office: when not with the 54 year-old Ismet Simsek, Kyrenia preferred the company of younger men.

Clarice brought her glance to the other end of the bar, where Richard sat nursing what looked like a glass of Scotch. His black suit coat hung open, revealing a soft blue shirt and a cream-colored tie. His dress, his posture, his demeanor all suggested he was someone on the verge of unlimited success. He feigned indifference to those around him, especially the woman in a shimmering blue cocktail dress that revealed ripeness of form and intent of purpose, who kept leaning toward him with words to engage him in conversa-

tion, to hint at availability, or to state bluntly what she wished.

lifted his glass and tilted it toward her, Kyrenia smiled and nodded.

The way she licks the salt from the rim of her Margarita glass; the poised way she sits on the barstool; the very presence she exudes announced Kyrenia's availability.

It had been like that seven years ago, when it was she sitting a stool away from him. He had not been on an assignment that night, so it had been easy to lure him into conversation, to dazzle him with her sensuality, to follow him without discussion when he had said, "Shall we?" Would she have made herself so available had she known what he was then, that he would cajole her into service, that she would watch him with indifference as he garroted the man who had just been inside her?

Tonight he was on assignment and the woman near him would soon turn her attention elsewhere, for Richard kept his glance focused on the target of his seduction. Kyrenia already had deflected the overtures of two men and though she periodically cast a casual eye around the bar, Kyrenia had noticed Richard's attention and kept bringing hers back to him. When he

Step One complete, Clarice thought as she watched Richard make his way from one end of the bar to the other. He would sit next to Kyrenia, buy her Margaritas, cajole her with his words, and simply say, "Shall we?" For Clarice, there was only the waiting until Sunday night, when she would hold the gun in her hand, and ...The words jolted her from her thoughts.

"Tell me you're not waiting for someone."

Clarice glanced at the young man standing next to her table. He had dark red hair combed softly to the side, pale blue eyes that seemed barely there in the bar's dimness, and delicate fingers wrapped around a mixed drink. He was handsome without being gaudy and lean without being muscular and self-assured without being narcissistic.

She smiled to herself. No reason not to enjoy herself as well.

* * *

The soft buzz of the television in the living room barely disturbed Clarice. She had turned it on while shuffling from the bedroom to the kitchen of the Central Office safe house. It wasn't bad as far as safe houses go, she thought now that she could see it in daylight. It just lacked a delicate touch in décor.

She poured coffee steaming from the pot, set the cup on the kitchen table next to a package of cigarettes with a Zippo lighter atop. She took one from the pack and lit it as she settled into the chair, fluffy terry cloth robe falling open as she crossed her legs. The initial rush of nicotine raced whirlwind through her, feeling as though a bit of gauze was being pulled over her as a shroud. She only ever smoked on assignments; it kept her hands occupied in idle moments. There would be many idle moments between now and fulfillment, she thought as she sipped coffee with a slight vanilla taste. Previously, she had been the proactive member of the team, reaching out to the target and accepting or inducing the target's bold touches. She liked that she brought pleasure unbridled in the final days of a target's life; perhaps it even added a little thrill, a rush almost as delightful as the nicotine.

Useless to dwell on that. Richard was doing the honors this time and she was the one left to her own devices, until he notified her of the particulars of the endgame. Had Richard ever told her what he did in these moments of waiting? She didn't think they ever discussed in detail the operations they had carried out together. Perhaps he had used this time to relax, to prep himself

Two mojitos, two beers
lead them to a small
Capitol Dome. She h
but slightly unfulfilled
not carry him into the

up for the final moment, to whip all thought but one from his mind. Perhaps he went sightseeing, long, rambling walking tours punctuated by stops at bakeries or open air cafes or ... she frowned when she realized she had no idea what sorts of things Richard liked. Then again, maybe he only prowled for diversion.

Last night had been an interesting diversion. The man who had called himself Robert exhibited interest in her and enjoyed making her laugh. The woman she had introduced herself to him as

Jane had returned the interest and laughed at all the right moments. Two mojitos, two beers, and 90 minutes later lead them to a small hotel not far from The Capitol Dome. She had left at one, sated but slightly unfulfilled because she would not carry him into the final moments of life.

What if she could?

s, and 90 minutes later
hotel not far from the
had left at one, sated
d because she would
e final moments of life.

She let smoke drizzle from her nose as she considered the possibility. Tomorrow she would kill. It would start her down a new path. They would ask her to do more killings later and even if this first killing proved difficult, the more she did, the easier they would become. Yet that would not fulfill her, would not thrill her, would not complete her.

What if last night, she thought as she sipped more coffee, in that second prolonged session where she had to work

hard to bring him to climax, if at the moment he was at his most vulnerable, she slid a knife into his heart or slashed his throat? Her eyes closed and her head arched back. Anticipation rushed through her. Arousal ...

A loud knocking at the door startled her. She stubbed her cigarette out, pushed herself up from the chair, and padded toward the front door, looking through the peephole. She pulled back in shock - - the man who had called himself Robert last night stood on the stoop. She jumped as he knocked loudly again. Had he followed her last night after she left? Was he the stalker type, obsessing that because she had gone with him, she was his to claim?

He rapped loudly a third time. She had no choice. She unchained the door, unlocked the deadbolt and opened the door.

“Robert,” she smiled. “What a pleasant surprise.”

“It’s Danton, actually,” he said as he pushed passed her. “Munitions.”

“I don’t understand.” She feigned confusion as she shut the door.

“Yes, you do Clarice.” He stood in the living room, oversized briefcase in his left hand.

I suppose I do. I'm having coffee in the kitchen. Join me?"

"As good a place as any for this."

She poured him a cup of coffee and re-filled her cup as he set his briefcase on the table opposite her.

"About last night," she said as she placed the cups on the table and settled into her chair.

"Just a pleasant diversion." His eyes dropped to her legs when she crossed them. "Today is business."

"And after business?"

"I will be on my way." He opened his briefcase, frowning as he watched her lighting a cigarette. He plunged his right hand into a latex glove, reached into the briefcase, and pulled out a small revolver. "This is what they call a Saturday Night Special. Cheap, easy to obtain, untraceable, and accurate at several feet."

She went to reach for it, but he pulled it back.

"Here." He picked up a package of latex gloves and tossed them to her. "Always wear these when you handle the gun. You'll not want to leave fingerprints."

She opened the pack and pulled one of

the gloves snug over her hand.

"This is a standard six-shot revolver." He pressed a button and the cylinder opened. "Fill each with a bullet, which you won't do until just before fulfillment." He closed it with a flick of the wrist. "At the right moment, walk briskly to the target." He worked his way around the table until he was standing next her, the gun pressed against her right temple. "Fire once." She jumped as the empty click of the hammer echoing more in her thoughts than in the room.

"It would be better to do this in the open. Inside a car would be too confining. After, you will replace the spent bullet with another, spin the barrel until the replacement bullet ends up here, cock the hammer, place the gun in the target's right hand, and make sure the target's finger is beneath yours when you pull the trigger."

"Should I just leave after?"

"No. You need to make it appear as a suicide, bullet to the temple, gunpowder on the hand, one bullet missing from the gun. Make sure the second bullet goes far and wide. Only then, walk away."

"You make it sound so simple."

"It is."

He was gone. She looked at the gun on the table. Her destiny?

After, you will experience the extreme pleasure only causing death can bring.”



* * *

“I don’t understand what is happening to me.” Clarice felt aware only of herself and the phone nestled against the ear.”

“Growth. Understanding. Coming to terms with who you will be.”

“A killer?” She shivers at the thought.

“A true tool.” The voice comes soothing. “Just as you have opened your legs for the target to enjoy in the last moments of life, it’s no different now. Except that you bring about the end.

Clarice cannot deny the arousal growing in her. She will take a life. She will watch a person die. She will turn and say, “Take me.” But is that enough? “Is it extreme?”

“You will find out. And to the question you ask yourself, and do not voice - - it is never enough?”

Clarice understands as she slips a hand inside her jeans.

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Sailing
photos and



the Virtual Seas

text by Hitomi Tamatzui

All I have to do is look outside the window in my Northeast Coast USA home and shiver. There's snow, it's cold, I'm wearing two pairs of

socks. I envy those in Australia and southern locations because it's WARM. The sun is shining hot there. The water is glorious - - not filled with ice.









But simply lying on a beach can be boring. I want to move, feel the wind in my face and hair.

What to do? SL always provides an answer. Find a boat in a beautiful warm climate and go sailing.







It's quite easy. Just type "Marina" in the search engine and poof! So many places to check out. I found quite a few marinas with the most detailed and gorgeous boats. Places like Blue Moon Marina, Eden Yacht and Boat Club, Hollywood Luxury Yacht Moorings, Spoon Drift Marina, SIYC Marina, Sailor's Cove East, Second Norway, and Naked Ocean Marina. And so many beautiful sailboats, powered sailboats, and motor yachts with fine details.

Not enough to just sail? Then check out the sailing and boat races.



Finity Westlake invited me for a sail on his two boats. The first is the Stargazer, a motorized Loonetta31 sailboat. He said that the motor is good for docking and getting out of the marina but for speed, the sails come up and off we go. The other is the Ven, a twin-propeller power yacht, with the horsepower any motor fanatic would drool over. It's big and fast.

amenities. Some people live on their boats instead of purchasing land homes. Seeing the interiors gives a good justification for that lifestyle. Linden Labs, realizing that their virtual world evolved out of water, left places like Blake Sea expressly for boating enthusiasts.

As for places to sail, I was surprised to



The big boats have luxury interiors, although most are pretty much the same. The larger, the more cabin space and

find Naked Ocean was the largest open water area with the most boats and slips. As expected, Naked is rated Adult



and nudity is required. No matter. I love the thought of sunning on the deck as the wind goes flying across my body and through my hair.

If you are interested, Blake Bay provides a free sailboat (no motor) for the beginners, called the Nemo 3.03. A nice start to a wonderful hobby and activity.

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Medici Univer

The Postmodern Un

Text and Photograph
by Myra Wildmist

“The rules on what is possible and impossible in the arts were made by people who had not tested the bounds of the possible by going beyond them...”

Go and make interesting mistakes, make amazing mistakes, make glorious and fantastic mistakes. Break rules. Leave the world more interesting for your being here. Make good art.”

- Neil Gaiman

<http://www.uarts.edu/neil-gaiman-key-note-address-2012>

Isabella de Medici is Born and Re-born

Meet Isabella di Cosimo I de Medici, daughter of Cosimo I de Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany and head of the powerful Medici family and bank, which fostered and helped give rise to the Renaissance.

Born in 1542, Isabella was educated in the arts, classics, and languages, a bright and highly educated woman in a world with few opportunities for educated women. With her position and the protection of her father, Cosimo, Isabella made the most of her life, though. She was active on the social scene, she enjoyed the company of intellectuals and artists, and was a great patron of the arts.

Sadly, in 1576, after the death of her

father, she was murdered by her husband, Paolo Orsini. Orsini likely used rumors of Isabella's infidelity as an excuse to murder her (Yes, this was a somewhat acceptable reason in the culture of the time) so he could marry his lover.

After just 33 years of life, the bright and vivacious Isabella de Medici was dead.

But now she's back, reincarnated in Second Life and once again very active in the art scene.

Meet Izzy, MediciPrincess, born into Second Life on January 18, 2014.

Now, unconstrained by the cultural restrictions of 16th century Florence, Izzy's (she's so much less formal now, too.) creativity and genius have been allowed to flourish.

Medici University – The Postmodern University

“I'd like to undo a lot of the educational lethargy that's set in with formal institutions.”

- Izzy (MediciPrincess)

About a year ago, Izzy founded Medici University and established an online presence, www.mediciuniversity.co.uk. MU is dedicated to the arts. There are no fees, no curriculum, no requirements, none of the highly-restrictive

organizational structures common to nearly all institutions.

When talking with Izzy about Medici University, the conversation inevitably leads to the conflict between Modernism and Postmodernism. “Modernism was so much about creating ‘My Utopia,’ ” she says, “... about the perfect world as engineered by ... whoever can declare [themselves] the authority. PoMo [Postmodernism] was, I think, about being more inclusive, about letting in all that messiness that Modernism tried to sweep away.”

Without a core curriculum and unburdened by the stress of exams, students are free to learn at their own pace, taking their studies in directions of their choosing, and exploring their passions. There are “no hoops,” as Izzy likes to say. Medici University is “here to empower you to create an alternative, deeply personalized program that gives you real and valuable experience on the way to the life you want to live.”

This might sound a bit like anarchy, and it's a format that's probably not well-suited for an engineering degree, but MU is an art school, and the arts struggle like a wild beast under the chains of a classical education system. The arts strain and tug at the leash of a core curriculum, and snap when instructed in the “right” way to create. The arts fairly howl for a postmodern

approach to education.

Medici University's postmodern approach to education also dispenses with the traditional roles associated with education, blurring the lines between student and teacher, allowing students to assume either role as needed, potentially giving rise to greater student interaction, as well as greater exchange of knowledge.

No one person or cadre of critics can stand as arbiters for what is art. From the moment the Impressionists rejected the rigid art standards of the Academie des Beaux Arts, nearly every new generation of artists has rejected the art “standards” of those who came before it. If there is one lesson to be learned from the constantly shifting definition of art, it's this: Art defines itself.

By removing many of the confines of a traditional education, MU allows students to define themselves and define their own art.

Medici University Comes to Second Life

“[G]reat things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.”

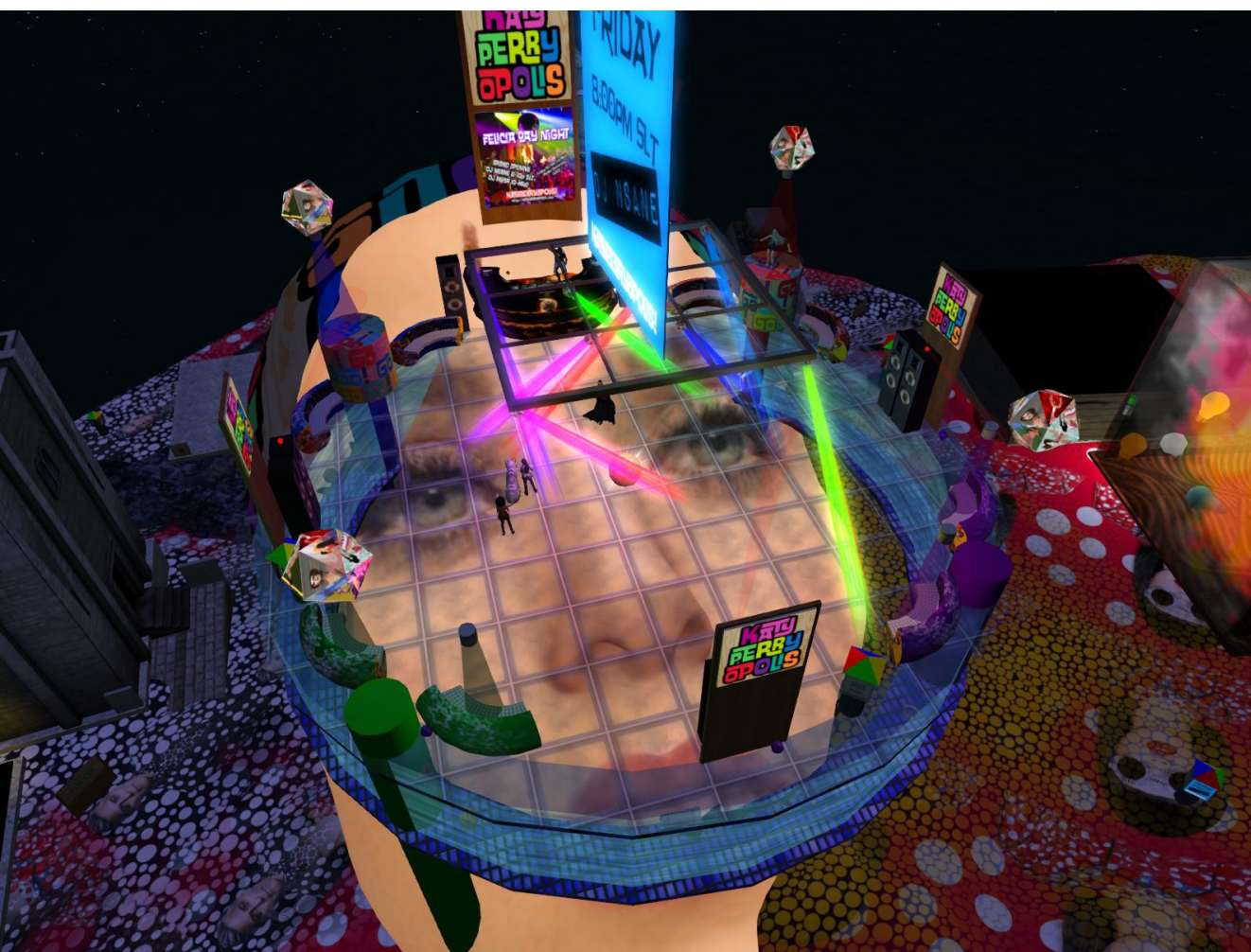
- Vincent van Gogh

Last year, Izzy submitted a grant application to the Linden Endowment for

the Arts. It was approved, and this year, in February 2015, Medici University established a virtual presence in Second Life at LEA 23. Construction began and the typical and nontypical (it's about the arts, remember?) buildings of campus life quickly sprung into existence:

The Bridge Brew Company: Every school needs a place where students can relax and have a drink.

KATYPERRYOPOLIS: On the weekends, MU students love to dance the night away on Katy Perry's giant face at KATYPERRYOPOLIS.



Avatar Fertility and Surrogacy Center: “Prim Babies were a tragic time of birth defects and sad parents. Today’s

Mesh Baby is a true achievement of modern avatar reproduction.”

Petopolis: Part of MU's AF&S's suite of family services. Not all babies are human. Petopolis offers state-of-the-art daycare facilities for your animal loved ones.

Emma Maybe's Art Supplies and Student Store: A nice and friendly place where students buy their much-needed art supplies.

Collaborateopolis: Rez a prim. Start a conversation. MU's meet-up place for coffeehouse conversation and solving Second Life's and the world's problems.

Every student at MU is given a plot of land and 150 prims to realize their artistic vision. One truly remarkable thing about SL is that if you give people prims, they will build. And MU students began building immediately.

“[MU is] giving students a chance to look into areas of expertise that they might not otherwise be able to address in any depth, [the] chance to stumble across something totally unexpected.” - Dai Oanomochi

There are many projects completed or under development at MU. Here's a very small sampling of what students are creating:

Roberta Breitmore: An exhibition of the work of Lynn Hershman Leeson, curated by Dai Oanomochi and Motorato Ware. Located at Nostradamus 23.

the issues of persona, identity, and cultural roles; issues pertinent to everyone but of special import to any citizen of Second Life.

Through the use of cosmetics and clothing, Leeson changed her appearance, and through the use of official documents, such as bank accounts and



Motorato Ware and Roberta Breitmore

Roberta Breitmore is a persona created by Lynn Hershman Leeson. Roberta existed from 1973 to 1978. Predating the advent of virtual worlds, Leeson was one of the first artists to explore

psychological profiles, she created Roberta Breitmore, a persona that blurred the lines between fiction and reality. Appropriately, in 2007, Roberta was reborn into SL as an avatar.

Dai Oanomochi and Motorato Ware also curate *Revolutionary Tides* and *Life Squared* at Nostradamus 24 and 25.

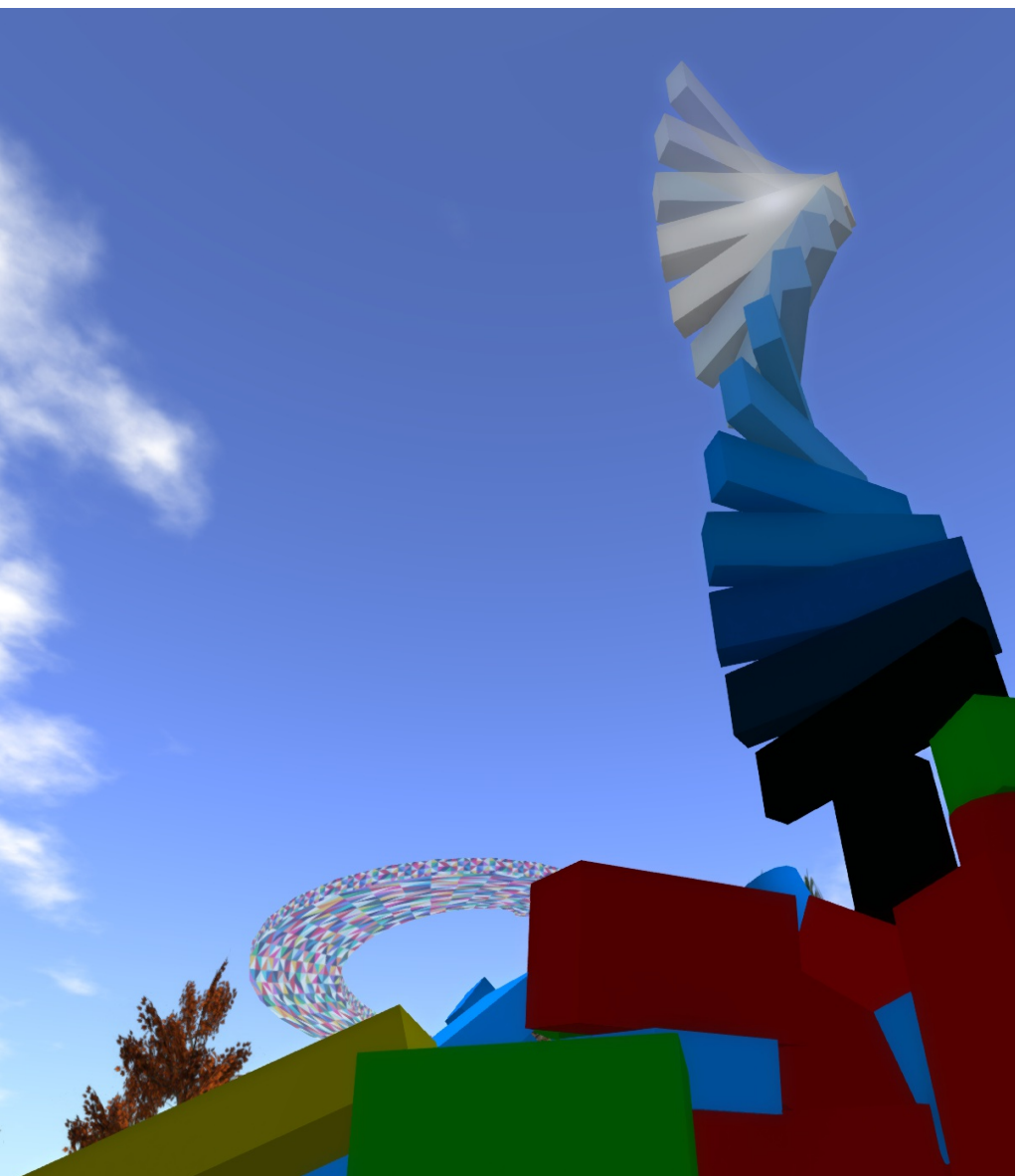
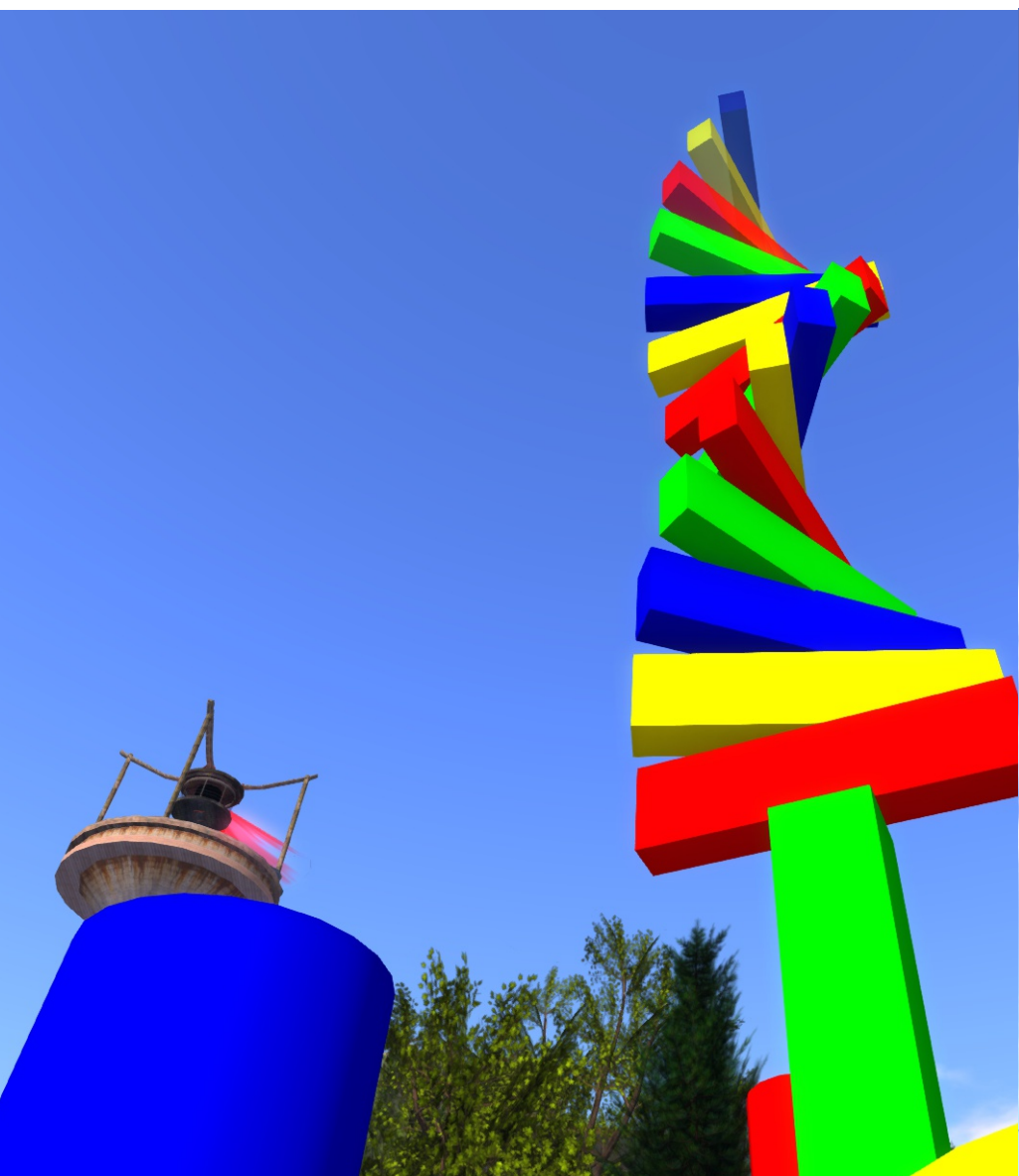
Neeva's Prim Tower: A sculpture by Neeva Torok. Located at Maria 4.

Neeva Torok has been in Second Life for over eight years - - almost a founding citizen - - but her tower is her first Second Life-specific art project. Neeva has been inspired by her short time at MU. "I like that it brings creative peoples of all types close together. [I]t has created instant community... there is such an energy ..."

Neeva changes her tower every day,

sometimes knocking it down, sometimes making parts of it transparent, sometimes changing the color ... whatever her mood inspires her to do on that particular day. As such, it is a uniquely virtual work of art - - its constantly changing nature is impossible to duplicate in real life. A Mark di Suvero sculpture - - iron constructs often made from I-beams (The real-life equivalent of a prim?) - - can take months or years to build in real life, but Neeva changes her tower every day, often in significant ways.

And Neeva's sculpture is fun. People love to climb on it, taking in the view of the campus. Unlike real life art, no one



has to worry about breaking or scuffing the art in SL. "I hadn't even thought about climbing and the interactive nature has become my biggest joy in the whole endeavor," Neeva says.

The Oracle: An installation by Isadora Alaya. Located at Nostradamus 27.

Off in the distance, a pillar of light shoots up into the stratosphere, seemingly going on forever. Whether it's a bonfire on a hill or lighthouse on the coast, a light in the sky has an almost primordial pull. The Oracle's beam of light will draw you to it, make you want to investigate. What is this light?

The beam emanates from the center of an enclosure surrounded by stone columns. A large sundial rotates slowly on the ground. It scintillates with energy charging the beam. Stepping inside, you're drawn into another world. The ivy-covered stone columns echo the reality of the world you've left, but this place feels different. Images float in the air; nearby, the columns appear translucent. There's something magical, mystical about this place.

Through her talent and artistry, Isadora has brought forth a world of her imagination. She visualized another place, another world, and conjured it into existence using her talent, artistry, and the tools of Second Life.

That's a beautiful thing. And that's the beauty of the Oracle.

Isa hopes to work with her usual collaborators, Rinzler Riot, Natsui Ishi, paula cloudpainter, Zoe Walden on other projects at MU.

Medici University: The Future

"I think SL is Burning Man in cyberspace." - Izzy

As you walk around the Medici University campus, you can't help but feel something important, even amazing, is happening here. There's a sense of community that's rapidly developing among the artists - - people hang out, chat, exchange ideas. There's a wellspring of creativity flowing at the school and the current just keeps getting stronger.

On June 30th, Medici University's grant ends. As of yet, Izzy has no plans to continue MU in Second Life. It will be wiped like a Tibetan Sand Mandala, a thing of great beauty to be enjoyed for just a brief period of time, but then it's gone.

Go explore Medici University while it's here.

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Runaround the 50s

by Harry Bailey

photography by Jami Mills

The short days, bitter chills and bleak landscapes of RL winter has the Perfect Gentlemen musing on the concept of escape. Of course, there is no better escape than teleporting into Second Life and the wonders that explode with possibilities.

As the PG sits on his beach deck overlooking a perfect star filled-night sky, the waves break below and the beacon from his lighthouse beats a solid pulse. He considers the time and patience it took him to build this "home" and the years it has taken to continually refine the feel of the space. Yet the time was well spent to "live" in a world where we can teleport across worlds, fly across landscapes, go back in time to enjoy the past, and yes, even surf, dance, and ski beyond our natural abilities.

His mind wanders back to the afternoon when in that "other" life, he had driven home from the airport along a street not far from the old original Route 66 made famous in song, movies, and television so many decades ago. Passing a corner now occupied by one of those familiar 40,000 square foot retail chain pharmacies, he was reminded nostalgically of what occupied that corner a very long time ago. It was home to one of Chicago's best known music locales, the sock hop diner known by the name *Jukebox Saturday Night*.

Each week, the top tunes of those decades played across the dance floor, and shakes and burgers were the meals of the night. Preened to look our best, we would head over for a night of dancing and fun. From poodle skirts to leather jackets, the styles were widely varied. It must be admitted that even The Perfect Gentleman at one point owned a Nehru jacket. Today, his avatar is more comfortable wearing black jeans and a black "Rt. 66" t-shirt as a reminder of the rock 'n roll fifties.



Major Chicago radio stations and nationally known DJs called out tunes live from a booth next to the dance floor, emanating a solid stream of patter

while the brilliantly lit Wurlitzer glowed in the background - - an icon of escape for all of us. For a few hours when we could get away and drive into the 'burbs of the big city, we were in another world from that of our daily lives. A time now long gone but not forgotten.

As the PG sits contemplating the waves from his beach home, he realizes that that world has not disappeared. It is still around, and much easier to get to



in this futuristic virtual world, complete with teleportation. Sims such as Runaround Sue's [Tarnburg Woods (54, 173, 21)], Greased Lightning [Greased Lightning (58, 175, 22)], and

yes, there is even a Happy Days diner [Tulsa Time (91, 42, 14)] there for our escape back in time.

In 1965, this PG was about to start high school, in love with an image of perfection and beauty that was one day to become his wife, SL partner, best friend, and lover. Alas, the days of sock hops on gym floors where some of us managed to find our first loves are long gone in that "other" life. Amazingly, those days still exist nightly here in SL and one of the longest rocking and still best spots for that experience is Runaround Sue's Sock Hop. All day long, every day, one can find great music from that era playing often with live DJs and people from around the world recreating the lifestyle represented by those perfect "gentlemen" we all visualize from that era: the "Fonz," Travolta, Brando, James Dean, and of course ELVIS, The King. On January 8th, they even had a tribute to Elvis on his 80th birthday complete with an Elvis performer.

Collecting a *rez* editorial and photo team, the PG swept his entourage to Sue's to share memories and fun. *rez* staff member and occasional co-writer Friday Blaisdale arrives in a poodle skirt in perfect detail! The Perfect Gentleman shares his appreciation of her look, as she shares that it is a classic acquired from a store no longer around. But never fear, there are still plenty of

spots to shop for fashions of bygone eras. One with a great name as well as a great line of vintage clothing is Fads of the Fifties [Goth (191, 110, 22)]. The two grab a set of dance animations and begin an evening of sock hop fun as rez Editor-in-Chief and lead photographer Jami Mills considers all the photo ops available. Soon a number of friends join us and the dance floor fills up with time traveling dancers. We even have that first-class DJ to spin the tunes in Maribol Inshan, one of the best Virtual-Worldwide.

* * * * *

Earlier in the evening, the creator, owner and namesake of Sue's, Susan Connell, agreed to sit down with The Perfect Gentleman to talk about the fun and the challenges of overseeing this great escape. The Amazing Run-around Sue's group counts almost 3,000 members, so apparently we are not alone in appreciation of going back in time in pursuit of the art of rock 'n roll.

Perfect Gentleman: Welcome, Sue. It is my pleasure to have this chance to sit down with you and learn more about Runaround Sue's and your part in making this great experience happen. How did you "artistically" find and set the specific feel to capture this experience?

Susan Connell: Thank you so much for

this opportunity. Runaround Sue's here in SL was created in early 2007 and our Malt Shop is styled after an old 50s-style soda fountain shop where I grew up in Iowa. We would escape there every weekend Friday and Saturday for jukebox fun, dancing and nostalgia, even in the late 70s and 80s.

Perfect Gentleman: What are the keys that make it possible to escape time in

We welcome other 50s
view any as a threat or
plenty of room for all of
to our era, the better

SL?

Susan Connell: It's a very magical world. Our dance floor and club are surrounded by over 60 photos of the great artists of the era and members love those pictures. All are in B&W except Dion, because he recorded Runaround Sue. We do all we can to stay true to our era, and if something didn't exist in the 50s or early 60s, we try hard not to do it here. Wandering, you'll find shops and even hidden ads of the era on old buildings too, like the Ford Edsel and Ipana Tooth Paste "brusha brusha brusha," a movie poster for

Rebel Without A Cause, and more. But spinning dance floors and neon beacons and strobes were not part of that era and so they are not part of us.

Perfect Gentleman: I know you have just recently relocated Sue's to a new sim. Are you getting the word out on the new site's landmark?

Susan Connell: We are trying hard to

and 60s clubs and don't competition, as there is f us. The more exposure r all the clubs will do.

get everyone our new landmark. Many people kept the old LM and are slow to find us, but word is getting back out and our many members come back and say they are so happy to have found us again. [Tarnburg Woods (54, 173, 21)]

Perfect Gentleman: How challenging is it to own and manage a club in SL over eight plus years consistently and successfully?

Susan Connell: Stay true to what works. Remember, it's your guests who truly "own" the club and we work for them. We do our best to keep it fun for

staff and members. It's like a family and we want to treat them as such and it pays off in rewards for everyone.

Perfect Gentleman: I know you have DJs from around the world. I remember one of my first experiences at Sue's was dancing with Yaq as the DJ and an entire afternoon of rock 'n roll hits, all in German! It was an amazing experience. Is rock 'n roll a universal "language"?

Susan Connell: Yes, it is. American and British rock 'n roll is loved worldwide, and in so many countries. DJ Yaq was a DJ of ours for a long time and our door is open to get him back. But sadly, I don't believe he's regularly in SL. So, if I may say, "Yaq, if you're still here, please come back!"

Perfect Gentleman: As I listen and dance at Sue's, the old Jimmy Dean hit, Big Bad John, plays in the background. What is it that keeps this song alive after over 50 years while in this day and age, the mines it is built around have never been experienced by most people?

Susan Connell: *Big Bad John* was a #1 hit for Jimmy Dean in September 1961 and is a song remembered and loved by so many. Rock 'n roll roots came from Blues and Country and this song transcends that era. It was a live style of so many families and hard work in those days and still even today. They were all good people and the song brings back

the great family memories.

Perfect Gentleman: When you yearn to escape, are you dancing and building at Runaround Sue's or are there other haunts and venues of SL that you appreciate?

Susan Connell: The rebuilding of Sue's on our new sim has kept me close to home for the last few months, but yes, there are so many great places in SL. We welcome other 50s and 60s clubs and don't view any as a threat or competition, as there is plenty of room for all of us. The more exposure of our era,

the better all the clubs will do. I welcome all those clubs to ask about our successes and what we've done to have our longevity here with Runaround Sue's.

Perfect Gentleman: Sue, can you tell me some history around the pink Caddy and the memorial to Susie Q? Obviously, with all the tributes to her, she was well known and liked.

Susan Connell: We lost our dear friend SusieQ on December 30th, and like all our great and wonderful staff and members, she was and will forever be



cherished here. Other than the Malt Shop and Pink Cadillac, those are the only two things at Sue's that have never changed in nearly eight years. We knew we needed to create her lasting memory and the Caddy seemed the right way. I do believe we are a rarity in SL for remembrances to our staff and members. We have a halo over the stage for our hostess TikaRose; we have our Malt Shop named for Brandi; our golden lamp post is for our hostess Love; and a plaque is on our fence for Peaches. All were loved here and we believe in remembering them every day. We know they all watch over us.

We also have a new permanent dedicated Veteran's Memorial Park. Without our Vets we wouldn't have all the freedoms we have.

Perfect Gentleman: What else would you like to share with us about this great venue and its ongoing success?

Susan Connell: I built Run-around Sue's in early 2007, opening on May 19th, 2007. I still remember the very first song to ever play here when we opened was the Righteous Brothers, *Unchained Melody*. I can still recall in June that year, a guest came here and she had a Rez Day of late 2003, so she'd already had a long time in SL

then, and she said to me, "You know a lot of people have tried to create a 50s style club in SL and they all failed, but here you got it all right!" I have never forgotten that comment and it's been a driving force for us, and the words echo here every day for me, and we try to live by them every day.

Perfect Gentleman: Thank you so much for taking the time to visit with me today, Sue. I look forward to seeing you often around Sue's and escaping many hours onto this wonderful dance floor to this great music. Runaround Sue's truly proves that time travel does exist here in SL, and I know it makes me smile each time I hear one of those great old tunes and look across the dance floor at all those enjoying the experience!

* * * * *

Now, my friends, get out those poodle skirts, penny loafers, bobby socks, and for you guys those Route 66 t-shirts and leather jackets for a very unique time of fun! The Perfect Gentleman and entourage look forward to dancing alongside all of you at Sue's, and sharing tales of our rock 'n roll experiences, both from the past and from the present! Rock 'n Roll on!

(Author: Photo opportunities abound with malt shop, checkered dance floor, romantic "Lover's Lane" along the water, etc.)

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Counting Sheep by Crap Mariner

I've been having trouble sleeping. I've tried counting sheep, but I've only got one sheep. His name is Fred. "One," I say, looking at Fred. "Baaaaaaaaa," says Fred. "Jump over the fence again, Fred," I say. "Baaaaaaaaa," says Fred, and he grazes a bit. So, I brained Fred with a baseball bat, carved him up, and cooked him. Fred was absolutely delicious! I woke up the next day, rested and feeling full. The next night, Fred was back, standing by the fence. And he was just as delicious when I ate him. Sure, it's the same sheep, but who's counting?



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